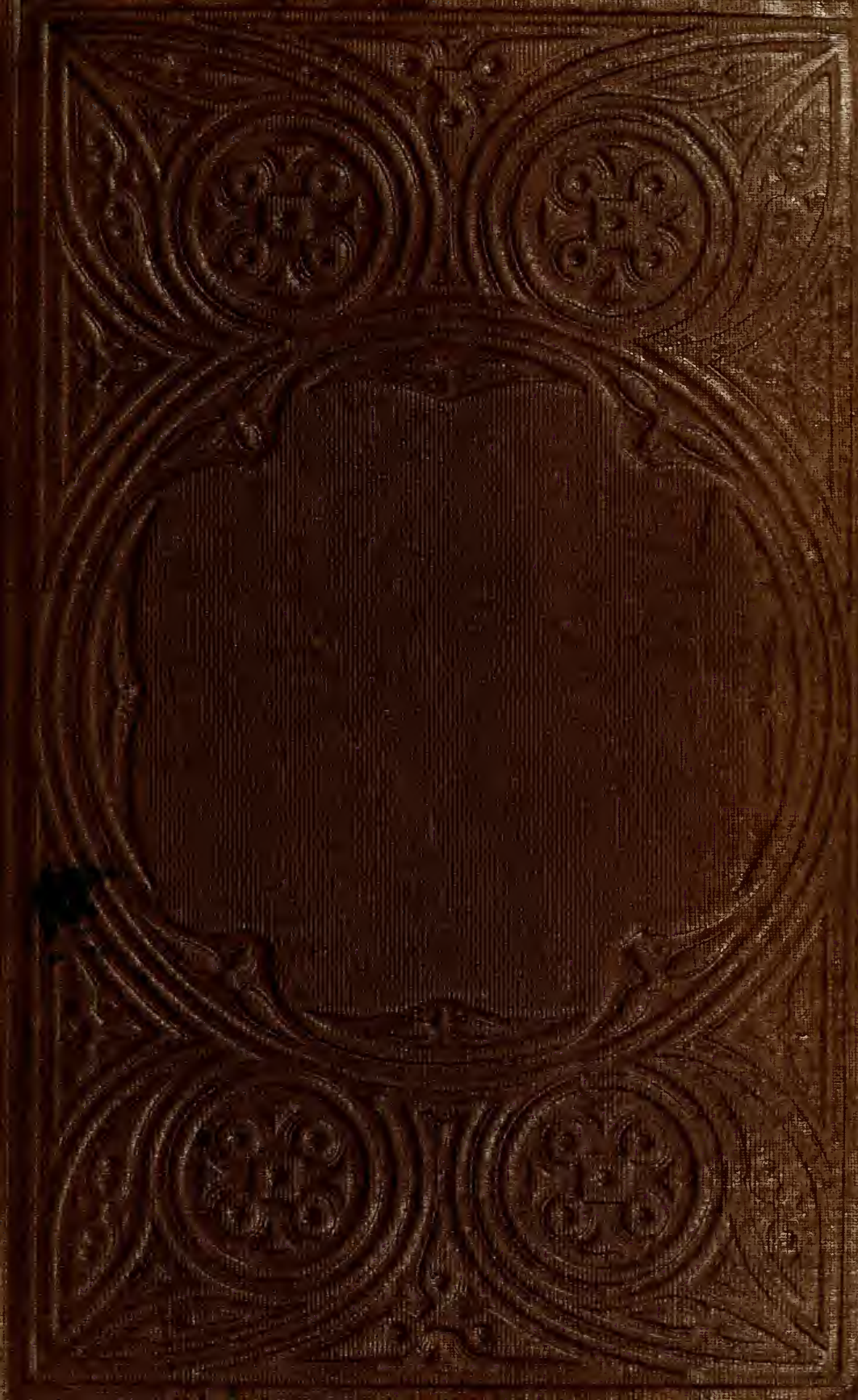






J. H. Mason

Painted by

JOHN FOSTER

GEMS OF BEAUTY.

FROM THE

WRITINGS OF JOHN FOSTER:

TOGETHER WITH HIS CELEBRATED

ESSAY ON DECISION OF CHARACTER.

With a Portrait on Steel.

NEW YORK:

DERBY & JACKSON, 119 NASSAU ST.

CINCINNATI:—H. W. DERBY & CO.

1857.

PR 4705
F6 A14
1857

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by

DERBY & JACKSON,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of
New York.

Gift

Mrs. Hennen Jennings

April 26, 1933

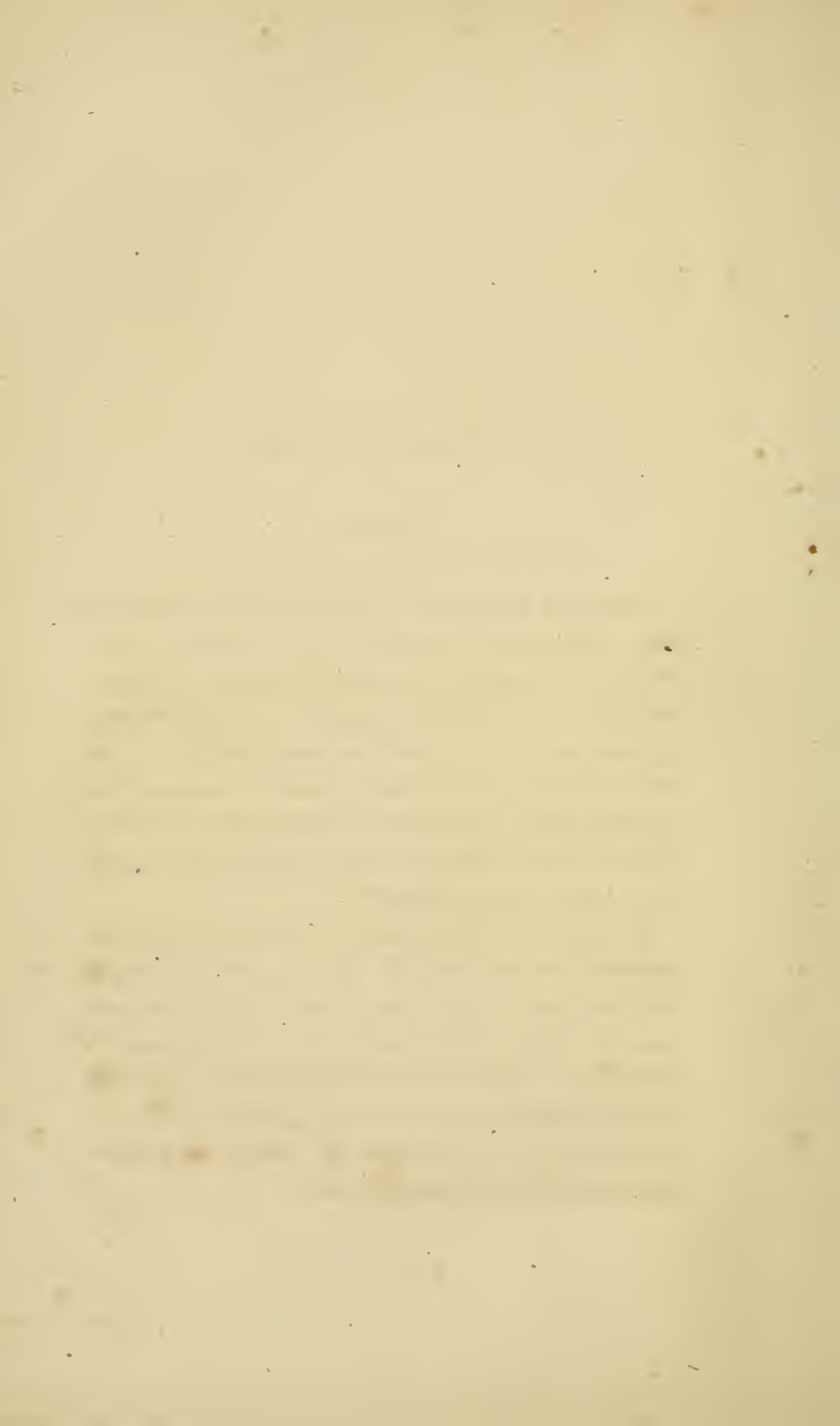
W. H. Tinson, Stereotyper.

GEORGE RUSSELL & Co., Printers.

P R E F A C E .

Introducing FOSTER to the church at Frome, Robert Hall says: "His manner is not very popular, but his conceptions are most extraordinary and original; his disposition very amiable, his piety unquestionable, and his sentiments moderately orthodox—about the level of Watts and Doddridge." In another communication to the same church, he pronounces him a "young man of the most extraordinary genius." At a later period he said of Foster's writings, "They are like a great lumber-wagon loaded with gold."

The eminent American reviewer of his "Life and Correspondence," ranking him with Hall, says: "Of the English minds that have departed from our world within a few years, none have excited a deeper interest, or wielded for a season a loftier power, than John Foster and Robert Hall." And Harris, the distinguished author of "Prize Essays," reviewing the same work, says: "He will retain the reputation of gifts that have rarely fallen to the lot of mortals."



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
Existence, Attributes, Works, and Providence of God, .	53
CHAPTER II.	
The Evidences of Religion—The Sources, Prejudices and Tendencies of Skepticism, etc., ...	67
CHAPTER III.	
The Law of God—Its Holiness, Comprehensiveness, Ap- plications and Evasions, ...	86
CHAPTER IV.	
Individual and Social Depravity of Man, ...	98
CHAPTER V.	
Christianity—Its Doctrines and Applications, ...	110
CHAPTER VI.	
The Obligations and Duties of Christianity, ...	137

CHAPTER VII.

Of Man—The Formation of Character—Its Sources and Diversities—Popular Ignorance and the Diffusion of Knowledge, ...	156
---	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

Youth—Its Advantages and Perils—Domestic Life and Virtues—Education of Children, ...	180
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

Human Life—Its Frailty and Brevity—Future Life—Its Mysteries and Revelations—Persuasives to a Chris- tian Life, ...	199
---	-----

CHAPTER X.

Places, Nations, Men and Books, ...	224
---	-----

CHAPTER XI.

Passion, Affection, Sensibility and Sentiment, ...	254
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

Observations upon Nature, Natural Objects and Scenes, Analogies, etc., , ...	267
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

Miscellanies, ...	284
-------------------------	-----

FOSTER'S ESSAY

ON DECISION OF CHARACTER.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE have several times talked of this bold quality and acknowledged its great importance. Without it, a human being, with powers at best but feeble and surrounded by innumerable things tending to perplex, to divert, and to frustrate their operations, is indeed a pitiable atom, the sport of divers and casual impulses. It is a poor and disgraceful thing, not to be able to reply, with some degree of certainty, to the simple questions, What will you be? What will you do?

A little acquaintance with mankind will supply numberless illustrations of the importance of this qualification. You will often see a person anxiously hesitating a long time between different, or opposite determinations, though impatient of the pain of such a state, and ashamed of the debility. A faint impulse of preference alternates toward the one, and toward the other; and the mind, while thus held in a trembling balance, is vexed that it cannot get some new thought, or feeling, or motive; that it has not more sense, more resolution, more of anything that would save it from envying even the decisive instinct of brutes. It wishes that any circumstance might happen, or any person might appear, that could deliver it from the miserable suspense.

In many instances, when a determination is adopted, it is frustrated by this temperament. A man, for example, resolves on a journey to-morrow, which he is not under an absolute necessity to undertake, but the inducements appear, this evening, so strong, that he does not think it

possible he can hesitate in the morning. In the morning, however, these inducements have unaccountably lost much of their force. Like the sun that is rising at the same time, they appear dim through a mist; and the sky lowers, or he fancies that it does, and almost wishes to see darker clouds than there actually are; recollections of toils and fatigues, ill repaid in past expeditions, rise and pass into anticipation; and he lingers, uncertain, till an advanced hour determines the question for him, by the certainty that it is now too late to go.

Perhaps a man has conclusive reasons for wishing to remove to another place of residence. But when he is going to take the first actual step towards executing his purpose, he is met by a new train of ideas, presenting the possible, and magnifying the unquestionable, disadvantages and uncertainties of a new situation; awakening the natural reluctance to quit a place to which habit has accommodated his feelings, and which has grown *warm* to him (if I may so express it), by his having been in it so long; giving a new impulse to his affection for the friends whom he must leave; and so detaining him still lingering, long after his judgment may have dictated to him to be gone.

A man may think of some desirable alteration in his plan of life; perhaps in the arrangements of his family, or in the mode of his intercourse with society—Would it be a good thing? He thinks it would be a good thing. It certainly would be a very good thing. He wishes it were done. He will attempt it *almost* immediately. The following day, he doubts whether it would be quite prudent. Many things are to be considered. May there not be in the change some evil of which he is not aware? Is this a proper time? What will people say? And thus, though he does not formally renounce his purpose, he shrinks out of it, with an irksome wish that he could be fully satisfied of the propriety of renouncing it. Perhaps he wishes that the thought had never occurred to him, since it has diminished his self-complacency, without promoting his virtue. But next week, his conviction of the wisdom and advantage of such a reform comes again with great force. Then—Is it so practicable as I was at first willing to imagine? Why not? Other men have done much greater things; a resolute mind may brave and accomplish every thing; difficulty is a stimulus and a triumph to a strong spirit; “the joys of conquest

are the joys of man." What need I care for people's opinion? It shall be done. He makes the first attempt. But some unexpected obstacle presents itself; he feels the awkwardness of attempting an unaccustomed manner of acting; the questions or the ridicule of his friends disconcert him; his ardor abates and expires. He again begins to question, whether it be wise, whether it be necessary, whether it be possible; and at last surrenders his purpose, to be perhaps resumed when the same feelings return, and to be in the same manner again relinquished.

While animated by some magnanimous sentiments which he has heard or read, or while musing on some great example, a man may conceive the design, and partly sketch the plan, of a generous enterprise; and his imagination revels in the felicity, to others and himself, that would follow from its accomplishment. The splendid representation always centres in himself as the hero who is to realize it.

In a moment of remitted excitement, a faint whisper from within may doubtfully ask, Is this more than a dream; or am I really destined to achieve such an enterprise? Destined!—and why are not this conviction of its excellence, this conscious duty of performing the noblest things that are possible, and this passionate ardor, enough to constitute a destiny? He feels indignant that there should be a failing part of his nature to defraud the nobler, and cast him below the ideal model and the actual examples which he is admiring; and this feeling assists him to resolve, that he will undertake this enterprise, that he certainly will, though the Alps or the Ocean lie between him and the object. Again his ardor slackens; distrustful of himself, he wishes to know how the design would appear to other minds; and when he speaks of it to his associates, one of them wonders, another laughs, and another frowns. His pride, while with them, attempts a manful defence; but his resolution gradually crumbles down toward their level; he becomes in a little while ashamed to entertain a visionary project, which therefore, like a rejected friend, desists from intruding on him, or following him, except at lingering distance; and he subsides, at last, into what he labors to believe a man too rational for, the schemes of ill-calculating enthusiasm. And it were strange if the effort to make out this favorable estimate of himself did not succeed, while it is so much more pleasant to attribute one's defect

of enterprise to wisdom, which on maturer thought disapproves it, than to imbecility, which shrinks from it.

A person of undecisive character wonders how all the embarrassments in the world happened to meet exactly in *his* way, to place him just in that one situation for which he is peculiarly unadapted, but in which he is also willing to think no other man could have acted with facility or confidence. Incapable of setting up a firm purpose on the basis of things as they are, he is often employed in vain speculations on some different supposable state of things, which would have saved him from all this perplexity and irresolution. He thinks what a determined course he could have pursued, *if* his talents, his health, his age, had been different; if he had been acquainted with some one person sooner; if his friends were, in this or the other point, different from what they are; or if fortune had showered her favors on him. And he gives himself as much license to complain, as if all these advantages had been among the rights of his nativity, but refused, by a malignant or capricious fate, to his life. Thus he is occupied—instead of marking with a vigilant eye, and seizing with a strong hand, all the possibilities of his actual situation.

A man without decision can never be said to belong to himself; since, if he dared to assert that he did, the puny force of some cause, about as powerful, you would have supposed, as a spider, may make a seizure of the hapless boaster the very next moment, and contemptuously exhibit the futility of the determinations by which he was to have proved the independence of his understanding and his will. He belongs to whatever can make capture of him; and one thing after another vindicates its right to him, by arresting him while he is trying to go on; as twigs and chips, floating near the edge of a river, are intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every little eddy. Having concluded on a design, he may pledge himself to accomplish it—*if* the hundred diversities of feeling which may come within the week, will let him. His character precluding all foresight of his conduct, he may sit and wonder what form and direction his views and actions are destined to take to-morrow; as a farmer has often to acknowledge that next day's proceedings are at the disposal of its winds and clouds.

This man's notions and determinations always depend very much on other human beings; and what chance for

consistency and stability, while the persons with whom he may converse, or transact, are so various? This very evening, he may talk with a man whose sentiments will melt away the present form and outline of his purposes, however firm and defined he may have fancied them to be. A succession of persons whose faculties were stronger than his own, might, in spite of his irresolute re-action, take him and dispose of him as they pleased. Such infirmity of spirit practically confesses him made for subjection, and he passes, like a slave, from owner to owner. Sometimes indeed it happens, that a person so constituted falls into the train, and under the permanent ascendancy of some one stronger mind, which thus becomes through life the oracle and guide, and gives the inferior a steady will and plan. This, when the governing spirit is wise and virtuous, is a fortunate relief to the feeling, and an advantage gained to the utility of the subordinate, and as it were, appended mind.

The regulation of every man's plan must greatly depend on the course of events, which come in an order not to be foreseen or prevented. But in accommodating the plans of conduct to the train of events, the difference between two men may be no less than that, in the one instance, the man is subservient to the events, and in the other, the events are made subservient to the man. Some men seem to have been taken along by a succession of events, and, as it were, handed forward in helpless passiveness from one to another; having no determined principle in their own characters, by which they could constrain those events to serve a design formed antecedently to them, or apparently in defiance of them. The events seized them as a neutral material, not they the events. Others, advancing through life with an internal invincible determination, have seemed to make the train of circumstances, whatever they were, conduce as much to their chief design as if they had, by some directing interposition, been brought about on purpose. It is wonderful how even the casualties of life seem to bow to a spirit that will not bow to them, and yield to subserve a design which they may, in their first apparent tendency, threaten to frustrate.

You may have known such examples, though they are comparatively not numerous. You may have seen a man of this vigorous character in a state of indecision concern-

ing some affair in which it was necessary for him to determine, because it was necessary for him to act. But in this case, his manner would assure you that he would not remain long undecided; you would wonder if you found him still balancing and hesitating the next day. If he explained his thoughts, you would perceive that their clear process, evidently at each effort gaining something toward the result, must certainly reach it ere long. The deliberation of such a mind is a very different thing from the fluctuation of one whose second thinking only upsets the first, and whose third confounds both. To *know how* to obtain a determination, is one of the first requisites and indications of a rationally decisive character.

When the decision was arrived at, and a plan of action approved, you would feel an assurance that something would absolutely be done. It is characteristic of such a mind, to think for effect; and the pleasure of escaping from temporary doubt gives an additional impulse to the force with which it is carried into action. The man will not re-examine his conclusions with endless repetition, and he will not be delayed long by consulting other persons, after he had ceased to consult himself. He cannot bear to sit still among unexecuted decisions and unattempted projects. We wait to hear of his achievements, and are confident we shall not wait long. The possibility or the means may not be obvious to us, but we know that every thing will be attempted, and that a spirit of such determined will is like a river, which, in whatever manner it is obstructed, will make its way-somewhere. It must have cost Cæsar many anxious hours of deliberation, before he decided to pass the Rubicon; but it is probable he suffered but few to elapse between the decision and the execution. And any one of his friends who should have been apprised of his determination, and understood his character, would have smiled contemptuously to hear it insinuated that though Cæsar had resolved, Cæsar would not dare; or that though he might cross the Rubicon, whose opposite bank presented to him no hostile legions, he might come to other rivers, which he would not cross; or that either rivers, or any other obstacle, would deter him from prosecuting his determination from this ominous commencement to its very last consequence.

One signal advantage possessed by a mind of this char-

acter is, that its passions are not wasted. The whole measure of passion of which any one, with important transactions before him, is capable, is not more than enough to supply interest and energy for the required practical exertions; therefore as little as possible of this costly flame should be expended in a way that does not augment the force of action. But nothing can less contribute or be more destructive to vigor of action, than protracted anxious fluctuation, through resolutions adopted, rejected, resumed, suspended; while yet nothing causes a greater expense of feeling. The heart is fretted and exhausted by being subjected to an alternation of contrary excitements, with the ultimate mortifying consciousness of their contributing to no end. The long-wavering deliberation, whether to perform some bold action of difficult virtue, has often cost more to feeling than the action itself, or a series of such actions, would have cost; with the great disadvantage too of not being relieved by any of that invigoration which the man in action finds in the activity itself, that spirit created to renovate the energy which the action is expending. When the passions are not consumed among dubious musings and abortive resolutions, their utmost value and use can be secured by throwing all their animating force into effective operation.

Another advantage of this character is, that it exempts from a great deal of interference and obstructive annoyance, which an irresolute man may be almost sure to encounter. Weakness, in every form, tempts arrogance; and a man may be allowed to wish for a kind of character with which stupidity and impertinence may not make so free. . When a firm, decisive spirit is recognized, it is curious to see how the space clears around a man, and leaves him room and freedom. The disposition to interrogate, dictate, or banter, preserves a respectful and politic distance, judging it not unwise to keep the peace with a person of so much energy. A conviction that he understands, and that he wills with extraordinary force, silences the conceit that intended to perplex or instruct him, and intimidates the malice that was disposed to attack him. There is a feeling, as in respect to Fate, that the decrees of so inflexible a spirit *must* be right, or that, at least, they *will* be accomplished.

But not only will he secure the freedom of acting for

himself, he will obtain also by degrees the coincidence of those in whose company he is to transact the business of life. If the manners of such a man be free from arrogance, and he can qualify his firmness with a moderate degree of insinuation; and if his measures have partly lost the appearance of being the dictates of his will, under the wider and softer sanction of some experience that they are reasonable; both competition and fear will be laid to sleep, and his will may acquire an unresisted ascendancy over many who will be pleased to fall into the mechanism of a system, which they find makes them more successful and happy than they could have been amidst the anxiety of adjusting plans and expedients of their own, and the consequences of often adjusting them ill. I have known several parents, both fathers and mothers, whose management of their families has answered this description; and has displayed a striking example of the facile complacency with which a number of persons, of different ages and dispositions, will yield to the decisions of a firm mind, acting on an equitable and enlightened system.

The last resource of this character is hard, inflexible pertinacity, on which it may be allowed to rest its strength after finding it can be effectual in none of its milder forms. I remember admiring an instance of this kind, in a firm, sagacious, and estimable old man, whom I well knew, and who has long been dead. Being on a jury, in a trial of life and death, he was satisfied of the innocence of the prisoner; the other eleven were of the opposite opinion. But he was resolved the man should not be condemned; and as the first effort for preventing it, very properly made application to the *minds* of his associates, spending several hours in laboring to convince them. But he found he made no impression, while he was exhausting the strength which it was necessary to reserve for another mode of operation. He then calmly told them that it should now be a trial who could endure confinement and famine the longest, and that they might be quite assured he would sooner die than release them at the expense of the prisoner's life. In this situation they spent about twenty-four hours; when at length all acceded to his verdict of acquittal.

It is not necessary to amplify on the indispensable importance of this quality, in order to the accomplishment of any thing eminently good. We instantly see, that every

path to signal excellence is so obstructed and beset, that none but a spirit so qualified can pass. But it is time to examine what are the elements of that mental constitution which is displayed in the character in question.

LETTER II.

PERHAPS the best mode would be, to bring into our thoughts, in succession, the most remarkable examples of this character that we have known in real life, or that we have read of in history, or even in fiction; and attentively to observe, in their conversations, manners, and actions, what principles appear to produce, or to constitute, this commanding distinction. You will easily pursue this investigation yourself. I lately made a partial attempt, and shall offer you a number of suggestions.

As a previous observation, it is beyond all doubt that very much depends on the constitution of the body. It would be for physiologists to explain, if it were explicable, the *manner* in which corporeal organization affects the mind; I only assume it as a fact, that there is in the material construction of some persons, much more than of others, some quality which augments, if it do not create, both the stability of their resolution, and the energy of their active tendencies. There is something that, like the ligatures which one class of the Olympic combatants bound on their hands and wrists, braces round, if I may so describe it, and compresses the powers of the mind, giving them a steady forcible spring and reaction, which they would presently lose if they could be transferred into a constitution of soft, yielding, treacherous debility. The action of strong character seems to demand something firm in its material basis, as massive engines require, for their weight and for their working, to be fixed on a solid foundation. Accordingly, I believe it would be found, that a majority of the persons most remarkable for decisive character, have possessed great constitutional physical firmness. I do not mean an exemption from disease and pain, nor any certain measure of mechanical strength, but a tone of vigor the

opposite to lassitude, and adapted to great exertion and endurance. This is clearly evinced in respect to many of them, by the prodigious labors and deprivations which they have borne in prosecuting their designs. The physical nature has seemed a proud ally of the moral one, and with a hardness that would never shrink, has sustained the energy that could never remit.

A view of the disparities between the different races of animals inferior to man, will show the effect of organization on disposition. Compare, for instance, a lion with the common beasts of our fields, many of them larger in bulk of animated substance. What a vast superiority of courage, and impetuous and determined action; which difference we attribute to some great dissimilarity of modification in the composition of the animated material. Now it is probable that a difference somewhat analogous subsists between some human beings and others in point of what we may call mere physical constitution; and that this is no small part of the cause of the striking inequalities in respect to decisive character. A man who excels in the power of decision has probably more of the physical quality of a *lion* in his composition than other men.

It is observable that women in general have less inflexibility of character than men; and though many moral influences contribute to this difference, the principal cause may probably be something less firm in the corporeal constitution. Now that physical quality, whatever it is, from the smaller measure of which in the constitution of the frame, women have less firmness than men, may be possessed by one man more than by men in general in a greater degree of difference than that by which men in general exceed women.

If there have been found some resolute spirits powerfully asserting themselves in feeble vehicles, it is so much the better; since this would authorize a hope, that if all the other grand requisites can be combined, they may form a strong character, in spite of an unadapted constitution. And on the other hand, no constitutional hardness will form a true character, without those superior properties; though it may produce that false and contemptible kind of decision which we term *obstinacy*; a stubbornness of temper, which can assign no reasons but mere will, for a constancy which acts in the nature of dead weight rather than

of strength; resembling less the reaction of a powerful spring than the gravitation of a big stone.

The first prominent mental characteristic of the person whom I describe is, a complete confidence in his own judgment. It will perhaps be said, that this is not so uncommon a qualification. I however think it is uncommon. It is indeed obvious enough, that almost all men have a flattering estimate of their own understanding, and that as long as this understanding has no harder task than to form opinions which are not to be tried in action, they have a most self-complacent assurance of being right. This assurance extends to the judgments which they pass on the proceedings of others. But let them be brought into the necessity of adopting actual measures in an untried situation, where, unassisted by any previous example or practice, they are reduced to depend on the bare resources of judgment alone, and you will see, in many cases, this confidence of opinion vanish away. The mind seems all at once placed in a misty vacuity, where it reaches round on all sides, but can find nothing to take hold of. Or if not lost in vacuity, it is overwhelmed in confusion; and feels as if its faculties were annihilated in the attempt to think of schemes and calculations among the possibilities, chances, and hazards which overspread a wide untrodden field; and this conscious imbecility becomes severe distress, when it is believed that consequences, of serious or unknown good or evil, are depending on the decisions which are to be formed amidst so much uncertainty. The thought painfully recurs at each step and turn, I may by chance be right, but it is fully as probable I am wrong. It is like the case of a rustic walking in London, who, having no certain direction through the vast confusion of streets to the place where he wishes to be, advances, and hesitates, and turns, and inquires, and becomes, at each corner, still more inextricably perplexed.* A man in this situation feels he shall be unfortunate if he cannot accomplish more than he can understand. Is not this frequently, when brought to the practical test, the

* "Why does not the man call a hackney-coach?" a gay reader, I am aware, will say of the person so bemazed in the great town. So he might, certainly (that is, if he knew where to find one); and the gay reader and I have only to deplore that there is no parallel convenience for the assistance of perplexed understandings.

state of a mind not disposed in general to undervalue its own judgment?

In cases where judgment is not so completely bewildered, you will yet perceive a great practical distrust of it. A man has perhaps advanced a considerable way towards a decision, but then lingers at a small distance from it, till necessity, with a stronger hand than conviction, impels him upon it. He cannot see the whole length of the question, and suspects the part beyond his sight to be the most important, for the most essential point and stress of it may be there. He fears that certain possible consequences, if they should follow, would cause him to reproach himself for his present determination. He wonders how this or the other person would have acted in the same circumstances; eagerly catches at any thing like a respectable precedent; would be perfectly willing to forego the pride of setting an example, for the safety of following one; and looks anxiously round to know what each person may think on the subject: while the various and opposite opinions to which he listens, perhaps only serve to confound his perception of the track of thought by which he had hoped to reach his conclusion. Even when that conclusion is obtained, there are not many minds that might not be brought a few degrees back into dubious hesitation, by a man of respected understanding saying, in a confident tone, Your plan is injudicious; your selection is unfortunate; the event will disappoint you.

It cannot be supposed that I am maintaining such an absurdity as that a man's complete reliance on his own judgment is a proof of its strength and rectitude. Intense stupidity may be in this point the rival of clear-sighted wisdom. I had once some knowledge of a person whom no mortal could have surpassed, not Cromwell or Strafford, in confidence in his own judgment and consequent inflexibility of conduct; while at the same time his successive schemes were ill-judged to a degree that made his disappointments ridiculous still more than pitiable. He was not an example of that *simple* obstinacy which I have mentioned before; for he considered his measures, and did not want for reasons which seriously satisfied himself of their being most judicious. This confidence of opinion may be possessed by a person in whom it will be contemptible or mischievous; but its proper place is in a very

different character, and without it there can be no dignified actors in human affairs.

If, after it is seen how foolish this confidence appears as a feature in a weak character, it be inquired what, in a rightfully decisive person's manner of thinking, it is that authorizes him in this firm assurance that his view of the concerns before him is comprehensive and accurate; he may, in answer, justify his confidence on such grounds as these: that he is conscious that objects are presented to his mind with an exceedingly distinct and perspicuous aspect, not like the shapes of moonlight, or like Ossian's ghosts, dim forms of uncircumscribed shade; that he sees the different parts of the subject in an arranged order, not in unconnected fragments; that in each deliberation the main object keeps its clear pre-eminence, and he perceives the bearings which the subordinate and conducive ones have on it; that perhaps several trains of thought, drawn from different points, lead him to the same conclusion; and that he finds his judgment does not vary in servility to the moods of his feelings.

It may be presumed that a high degree of this character is not attained without a considerable measure of that kind of certainty, with respect to the relations of things, which can be acquired only from experience and observation. A very protracted course of time, however, may not be indispensable for this discipline. An extreme vigilance in the exercise of observation, and a strong and strongly exerted power of generalizing on experience, may have made a comparatively short time enough to supply a large share of the wisdom derivable from these sources; so that a man may, long before he is old, be rich in the benefits of experience, and therefore may have all the decision of judgment legitimately founded on that accomplishment. This knowledge from experience he will be able to apply in a direct and immediate manner, and without refining it into general principles, to some situations of affairs, so as to anticipate the consequences of certain actions in those situations by as plain a reason, and as confidently, as the kind of fruit to be produced by a given kind of tree. Thus far the facts of his experience will serve him as precedents; cases of such near resemblance to those in which he is now to act as to afford him a rule by the most immediate inference. At the next step, he will be able to apply this knowledge,

now converted into general principles, to a multitude of cases bearing but a partial resemblance to anything he has actually witnessed. And then, in looking forward to the possible occurrence of altogether new combinations of circumstances, he can trust to the resources which he is persuaded his intellect will open to him, or is humbly confident, if he be a devout man, that the Supreme Intelligence will not suffer to be wanting to him when the occasion arrives. In proportion as his views include, at all events, more certainties than those of other men, he is with good reason less fearful of contingencies. And if, in the course of executing his design, unexpected disastrous events should befall, but which are not owing to anything wrong in the plan and principles of that design, but to foreign causes; it will be characteristic of a strong mind to attribute these events discriminatively to their own causes, and not to the *plan* which, therefore, instead of being disliked and relinquished, will be still as much approved as before, and the man will proceed calmly to the sequel of it without any change of arrangement; unless, indeed, these sinister events should be of such consequence as to alter the whole state of things to which the plan was correctly adapted, and so create a necessity to form an entirely new one, adapted to that altered state.

Though he do not absolutely despise the understandings of other men, he will perceive their dimensions as compared with his own, which will preserve its independence through every communication and encounter. It is, however, a part of this very independence, that he will hold himself free to alter his opinion, if the information which may be communicated to him shall bring sufficient reason. And as no one is so sensible of the importance of a complete acquaintance with a subject as the man who is always endeavoring to think conclusively, he will listen with the utmost attention to the *information*, which may sometimes be received from persons for whose *judgment* he has no great respect. The information which they may afford him is not at all the less valuable for the circumstance, that his practical inferences from it may be quite different from theirs. If they will only give him an accurate account of facts, he does not care how indifferently they may reason on them. Counsel will in general have only so much weight with him as it supplies knowledge which may assist

his judgment; he will yield nothing to it implicitly as authority, except when it comes from persons of approved and eminent wisdom; but he may hear it with more candor and good temper, from being conscious of this independence of his judgment, than the man who is afraid lest the first person that begins to persuade him, should baffle his determination. He feels it entirely a work of his own to deliberate and to resolve, amidst all the advice which may be attempting to control him. If, with an assurance of his intellect being of the highest order, he also holds a commanding station, he will feel it gratuitous to consult with any one, excepting merely to receive statements of facts. This appears to be exemplified in the man, who has lately shown the nations of Europe how large a portion of the world may, when Heaven permits, be at the mercy of the solitary workings of an individual mind.

The strongest trial of this determination of judgment is in those cases of urgency where something must immediately be done, and the alternative of right or wrong is of important consequence; as in the duty of a medical man, treating a patient whose situation at once requires a daring practice, and puts it in painful doubt what to dare. A still stronger illustration is the case of a general who is compelled, in the very instant, to make dispositions on which the event of a battle, the lives of thousands of his men, or perhaps almost the fate of a nation, may depend. He may even be placed in a dilemma which appears equally dreadful on both sides. Such a predicament is described in Denon's account of one of the sanguinary conflicts between the French and Mamelukes, as having for a while held in the most distressing hesitation General Desaix, though a prompt and intrepid commander.

LETTER III.

THIS indispensable basis, confidence of opinion, is however not enough to constitute the character in question. For many persons who have been conscious and proud of a much stronger grasp of thought than ordinary men, and

have held the most decided opinions on important things to be done, have yet exhibited, in the listlessness or inconstancy of their actions, a contrast and a disgrace to the operations of their understandings. For want of some cogent feeling impelling them to carry every internal decision into action, they have been still left where they were; and a dignified judgment has been seen in the hapless plight of having no effective forces to execute its decrees.

It is evident, then (and I perceive I have partly anticipated this article in the first letter), that another essential principle of the character is, a total incapability of surrendering to indifference or delay the serious determinations of the mind. A strenuous *will* must accompany the conclusions of thought, and constantly incite the utmost efforts to give them a practical result. The intellect must be invested, if I may so describe it, with a glowing atmosphere of passion, under the influence of which, the cold dictates of reason take fire, and spring into active powers.

Revert once more in your thoughts to the persons most remarkably distinguished by this quality. You will perceive, that instead of allowing themselves to sit down delighted after the labor of successful thinking, as if they had completed some great thing, they regard this labor but as a circumstance of preparation, and the conclusions resulting from it as of no more value (till going into effect) than the entombed lamps of the Rosicrucians. They are not disposed to be content in a region of mere ideas, while they ought to be advancing into the field of corresponding realities; they retire to that region sometimes, as ambitious adventurers anciently went to Delphi, to consult, but not to reside. You will therefore find them almost uniformly in determined pursuit of some object, on which they fix a keen and steady look, never losing sight of it while they follow it through the confused multitude of other things.

A person actuated by such a spirit, seems by his manner to say, Do you think that I would not disdain to adopt a purpose which I would not devote my utmost force to effect; or that having thus devoted my exertions, I will intermit or withdraw them, through indolence, debility, or caprice; or that I will surrender my object to any interference, except the uncontrollable dispensations of Providence? No, I am linked to my determination with iron bands; it clings to me as if a part of my destiny; and if

its frustration be, on the contrary, doomed a part of that destiny, it is doomed so only through calamity or death.

This display of systematic energy seems to indicate a constitution of mind in which the passions are commensurate with the intellectual part, and at the same time hold an inseparable correspondence with it, like the faithful sympathy of the tides with the phases of the moon. There is such an equality and connection. The subjects of the decisions of judgment become proportionally and of course the objects of passion. When the judgment decides with a very strong preference, that same strength of preference, actuating also the passions, devotes them with energy to the object, as long as it is thus approved; and this will produce such a conduct as I have described. When, therefore, a firm, self-confiding, and unaltering judgment fails to make a decisive character, it is evident either that the passions in that mind are too languid to be capable of a strong and unremitting excitement, which defect makes an indolent or irresolute man; or that they perversely sometimes coincide with judgment and sometimes clash with it, which makes an inconsistent or versatile man.

There is no man so irresolute as not to act with determination in many single cases, where the motive is powerful and simple, and where there is no need of plan and perseverance; but this gives no claim to the term *character*, which expresses the habitual tenor of a man's active being. The character may be displayed in the successive unconnected undertakings, which are each of limited extent, and end with the attainment of their particular objects. But it is seen in its most commanding aspect in those grand schemes of action, which have no necessary point of conclusion, which continue on through successive years, and extend even to that dark period when the agent himself is withdrawn from human sight.

I have repeatedly, in conversation, remarked to you the effect of what has been called a Ruling Passion. When its object is noble, and an enlightened understanding regulates its movements, it appears to me a great felicity; but whether its object be noble or not, it infallibly creates, where it exists in great force, that active ardent constancy, which I describe as a capital feature of the decisive character. The Subject of such a commanding passion wonders, if indeed he were at leisure to wonder, at the persons who

pretend to attach importance to an object which they make none but the most languid efforts to secure. The utmost powers of the man are constrained into the service of the favorite Cause by this passion, which sweeps away, as it advances, all the trivial objections and little opposing motives, and seems almost to open a way through impossibilities. This spirit comes on him in the morning as soon as he recovers his consciousness, and commands and impels him through the day, with a power from which he could not emancipate himself if he would. When the force of habit is added, the determination becomes invincible, and seems to assume rank with the great laws of nature, making it nearly as certain that such a man will persist in his course as that in the morning the sun will rise.

A persisting untamable efficacy of soul gives a seductive and pernicious dignity even to a character which every moral principle forbids us to approve. Often in the narrations of history and fiction, an agent of the most dreadful designs compels a sentiment of deep respect for the unconquerable mind displayed in their execution. While we shudder at his activity, we say with regret, mingled with an admiration which borders on partiality, What a noble being this would have been, if goodness had been his destiny! The partiality is evinced in the very selection of terms, by which we show that we are tempted to refer his atrocity rather to his destiny than to his choice. I wonder whether an emotion like this has not been experienced by each reader of *Paradise Lost*, relative to the Leader of the infernal spirits; a proof, if such were the fact, of some insinuation of evil into the magnificent creation of the poet. In some of the high examples of ambition (the ambition which is a vice), we almost revere the force of mind which impelled them forward through the longest series of action, superior to doubt and fluctuation, and disdainful of ease, of pleasures, of opposition, and of danger. We bend in homage before the ambitious spirit which reached the true sublime in the reply of Pompey to his friends, who dissuaded him from hazarding his life on a tempestuous sea in order to be at Rome on an important occasion: "It is necessary for me to go, it is not necessary for me to live."

Revenge has produced wonderful examples of this unremitting constancy to a purpose. Zanga is a well-supported

illustration. And you may have read of a real instance of a Spaniard, who, being injured by another inhabitant of the same town, resolved to destroy him; the other was apprised of this, and removed with the utmost secrecy, as he thought, to another town at a considerable distance where, however, he had not been more than a day or two before he found that his enemy also was there. He removed in the same manner to several parts of the kingdom remote from each other; but in every place quickly perceived that his deadly pursuer was near him. At last he went to South America, where he had enjoyed his security but a very short time, before his relentless pursuer came up with him, and accomplished his purpose.

You may recollect the mention in one of our conversations, of a young man who wasted in two or three years a large patrimony, in profligate revels with a number of worthless associates calling themselves his friends, till his last means were exhausted, when they of course treated him with neglect or contempt. Reduced to absolute want, he one day went out of the house with an intention to put an end to his life; but wandering awhile almost unconsciously, he came to the brow of an eminence which overlooked what were lately his estates. Here he sat down and remained fixed in thought a number of hours, at the end of which he sprang from the ground with a vehement exulting emotion. He had formed his resolution, which was that all these estates should be his again; he had formed his plan too, which he instantly began to execute. He walked hastily forward, determined to seize the very first opportunity, of however humble a kind, to gain any money, though it were ever so despicable a trifle, and resolved absolutely not to spend, if he could help it, a farthing of whatever he might obtain. The first thing that drew his attention was a heap of coals, shot out of carts on the pavement before a house. He offered himself to shovel or wheel them into the place where they were to be laid, and was employed. He received a few pence for the labor; and then, in pursuance of the saying part of his plan, requested some small gratuity of meat and drink, which was given him. He then looked out for the next thing that might chance to offer; and went, with indefatigable industry, through a succession of servile employments, in different places, of longer and shorter duration, still scrupulously

avoiding, as far as possible, the expense of a penny. He promptly seized *every* opportunity which could advance his design, without regarding the meanness of occupation or appearance. By this method he had gained, after a considerable time, money enough to purchase, in order to sell again, a few cattle, of which he had taken pains to understand the value. He speedily but cautiously turned his first gains into second advantages; retained without a single deviation his extreme parsimony; and thus advanced by degrees into larger transactions and incipient wealth. I did not hear, or have forgotten, the continued course of his life; but the final result was, that he more than recovered his lost possessions, and died an inveterate miser, worth 60,000*l*. I have always recollected this as a signal instance, though in an unfortunate and ignoble direction, of decisive character, and of the extraordinary *effect* which, according to general laws, belongs to the strongest form of such a character.

But not less decision has been displayed by men of virtue. In this distinction no man ever exceeded, or ever will exceed, for instance, the late illustrious Howard.

The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermitted, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of anything like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a pitch of excitement and impulsion almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds; as a great river, in its customary state, is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent.

The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings toward the main

object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of determination which was too rigid to be affected by lighter interests, and on which therefore the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling which he could spare to be diverted among the innumerable varieties of the extensive scene which he traversed; his subordinate feelings nearly lost their separate existence and operation, by falling into the grand one. There have not been wanting trivial minds to mark this as a fault in his character. But the mere men of taste ought to be silent respecting such a man as Howard; he is above their sphere of judgment. The invisible spirits, who fulfill their commission of philanthropy among mortals, do not care about pictures, statues, and sumptuous buildings; and no more did he, when the time in which he must have inspected and admired them, would have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life. The curiosity which he might feel, was reduced to wait till the hour should arrive, when its gratification should be presented by conscience (which kept a scrupulous charge of all his time), as the *duty* of that hour. If he was still at every hour, when it came, fated to feel the attractions of the fine arts but the second claim, they might be sure of their revenge; for no other man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic acknowledged rule of duty, as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. Such a sin against taste is very far beyond the reach of common saintship to commit. It implied an inconceivable severity of conviction, that he had *one thing to do*, and that he who would do some great thing in this short life, must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as, to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity.

His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that even at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness as if it had been nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labor and enterprise by which he was to reach it. So conspicuous was it before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every movement and every day was an approximation. As his method referred everything he did and thought to the end, and as his exertion did not relax for a moment, he made the

trial, so seldom made, what is the utmost effect which may be granted to the last possible efforts of a human agent: and therefore what he did not accomplish, he might conclude to be placed beyond the sphere of mortal activity, and calmly lead to the immediate disposal of Providence.

Unless the eternal happiness of mankind be an insignificant concern, and the passion to promote it an inglorious distinction, I may cite George Whitefield as a noble instance of this attribute of the decisive character, this intense necessity of action. The great cause which was so languid a thing in the hands of many of its advocates, assumed in his administrations an unmitigable urgency.

Many of the Christian missionaries among the heathens, such as Brainerd, Elliot, and Schwartz, have displayed memorable examples of this dedication of their whole being to their office, this abjuration of all the quiescent feelings.

This would be the proper place for introducing (if I did not hesitate to introduce in any connection with merely human instances) the example of him who said, "I must be about my Father's business. My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished."

LETTER IV.

AFTER the illustrations on the last article, it will seem but a very slight transition when I proceed to specify Courage as an essential part of the decisive character. An intelligent man, adventurous only in thought, may sketch the most excellent scheme, and after duly admiring it, and himself as its author, may be reduced to say, What a noble spirit that would be which should dare to realize this! A noble spirit! is it I? And his heart may answer in the negative, while he glances a mortified thought of inquiry round to recollect persons who would venture what he dares not, and almost hopes not to find them. Or if by

extreme effort he has brought himself to a resolution of braving the difficulty, he is compelled to execrate the timid lingerings that still keep him back from the trial. A man endowed with the complete character, might say, with a sober consciousness, as remote from the spirit of bravado as it is from timidity, Thus, and thus, is my conviction and my determination; now for the phantoms of fear; let me look them in the face; their menacing glare and ominous tones will be lost on me; "I dare do all that may become a man." I trust I shall firmly confront everything that threatens me while prosecuting my purpose, and I am prepared to meet the consequences of it when it is accomplished. I should despise a being, though it were myself, whose agency could be held enslaved by the gloomy shapes of imagination, by the haunting recollections of a dream, by the whistling or the howling of winds, by the shriek of owls, by the shades of midnight, or by the threats or frowns of man. I should be indignant to feel that, in the commencement of an adventure, I could think of nothing but the deep pit by the side of the way where I must walk, into which I may slide, the mad animal which it is not impossible that I may meet, or the assassin who may lurk in a thicket of yonder wood. And I disdain to compromise the interests that rouse me to action, for the privilege of an ignoble security.

As the conduct of a man of decision is always individual, and often singular, he may expect some serious trials of courage. For one thing, he may be encountered by the strongest disapprobation of many of his connexions, and the censure of the greater part of the society where he is known. In this case, it is not a man of common spirit that can show himself just as at other times, and meet their anger in the same undisturbed manner as he would meet some ordinary inclemency of the weather; that can, without harshness or violence, continue to effect every moment some part of his design, coolly replying to each ungracious look and indignant voice, I am sorry to oppose you: I am not unfriendly to you, while thus persisting in what excites your displeasure; it would please me to have your approbation and concurrence, and I think I should have them if you would seriously consider my reasons; but meanwhile, I am superior to opinion, I am not to be intimidated by reproaches, nor would your favor and applause be any reward

for the sacrifice of my object. As you can do without my approbation, I can certainly do without yours; it is enough that I can approve myself, it is enough that I appeal to the last authority in the creation. Amuse yourselves as you may, by continuing to censure or to rail; I must continue to act.

The attack of contempt and ridicule is perhaps a still greater trial of courage. It is felt by all to be an admirable thing, when it can in no degree be ascribed to the hardness of either stupidity or confirmed depravity, to sustain for a considerable time, or in numerous instances, the looks of scorn, or an unrestrained shower of taunts and jeers, with perfect composure, and proceed immediately after, or at the time, on business that provokes all this ridicule. This invincibility of temper will often make even scoffers themselves tired of the sport: they begin to feel that against such a man it is a poor sort of hostility to joke and sneer; and there is nothing that people are more mortified to spend in vain than their scorn. Till, however, a man shall become a veteran, he must reckon on sometimes meeting this trial in the course of virtuous enterprise. And if, at the suggestion of some meritorious but unprecedented proceeding, I hear him ask, with a look and tone of shrinking alarm, But will they not laugh at me?—I know that he is not the person whom this essay attempts to describe. A man of the right kind would say, They will smile, they will laugh, will they? Much good may it do them. I have something else to do than to trouble myself about their mirth. I do not care if the whole neighborhood were to laugh in a chorus. I should indeed be sorry to see or hear such a number of fools, but pleased enough to find that they considered me as an outlaw to their tribe. The good to result from my project will not be less, because vain and shallow minds that cannot understand it, are diverted at it and at me. What should I think of my pursuits, if every trivial, thoughtless being could comprehend or would applaud them; and of myself, if my courage needed levity and ignorance for their allies, or could be abashed at their sneers?

I remember, that on reading the account of the project for conquering Peru, formed by Almagro, Pizarro, and De Luques, while abhorring the actuating principle of the men, I could not help admiring the hardihood of mind which

made them regardless of scorn. These three individuals, before they had obtained any associates, or arms, or soldiers, or more than a very imperfect knowledge of the power of the kingdom they were to conquer, celebrated a solemn mass in one of the great churches, as a pledge and a commencement of the enterprise, amidst the astonishment and contempt expressed by a multitude of people for what was deemed a monstrous project. They, however, proceeded through the service, and afterwards to their respective departments of preparation, with an apparently entire insensibility to all this triumphant contempt; and thus gave the first proof of possessing that invincible firmness with which they afterwards prosecuted their design, till they attained a success, the destructive process and many of the results of which humanity has ever deplored.

Milton's Abdiel is a noble illustration of the courage that rises invincible above the derision not only of the multitude, but of the proud and elevated.

But there may be situations where decision of character will be brought to trial against evils of a darker aspect than disapprobation or contempt. There may be the threatening of serious sufferings; and very often, to dare as far as conscience or a great cause required, has been to dare to die. In almost all plans of great enterprise, a man must systematically dismiss, at the entrance, every wish to stipulate with his destiny for safety. He voluntarily treads within the precincts of danger; and though it be possible he may escape, he ought to be prepared with the fortitude of a self-devoted victim. This is the inevitable condition on which heroes, travellers or missionaries among savage nations, and reformers on a grand scale, must commence their career. Either they must allay their fire of enterprise, or abide the liability to be exploded by it from the world.

The last decisive energy of a rational courage, which confides in the Supreme Power, is very sublime. It makes a man who intrepidly dares everything that can oppose or attack him within the whole sphere of mortality; who will still press toward his object while death is impending over him; who would retain his purpose unshaken amidst the ruins of the world.

It was in the true elevation of this character that Luther,

when cited to appear at the Diet of Worms, under a very questionable assurance of safety from high authority, said to his friends, who conjured him not to go, and warned him by the example of John Huss, whom, in a similar situation, the same pledge of protection had not saved from the fire, "I am called in the name of God to go, and I would go, though I were certain to meet as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the houses."

A reader of the Bible will not forget Daniel, braving in calm devotion the decree which virtually consigned him to the den of lions; or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, saying to the tyrant, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," when the "burning fiery" furnace was in sight.

The combination of these several essential principles constitutes that state of mind which is a grand requisite to decision of character, and perhaps its most striking distinction—the full agreement of mind with itself, the consenting co-operation of all its powers and all its dispositions.

What an unfortunate task it would be for a charioteer, who had harnessed a set of horses, however strong, if he could not make them draw together; if while one of them would go forward, another was restiff, another struggled backward, another started aside. If even one of the four were unmanageably perverse, while the three were tractable, an aged beggar with his crutch might leave Phaëton behind. So in a human being, unless the chief forces act consentaneously, there can be no inflexible vigor, either of will or execution. *One* dissentient principle in the mind not only deducts so much from the strength and mass of its agency, but counteracts and embarrasses all the rest. If the judgment holds in low estimation that which yet the passions incline to pursue, the pursuit will be irregular and inconstant, though it may have occasional fits of animation, when those passions happen to be highly stimulated. If there is an opposition between judgment and habit, though the man will probably continue to act mainly under the sway of habit in spite of his opinions, yet sometimes the intrusion of those opinions will have for the moment an effect like that of Prospero's wand on the limbs of Ferdinand; and to be alternately impelled by habit, and checked by opinion,

will be a state of vexatious debility. If two principal passions are opposed to each other, they will utterly distract any mind, whatever might be the force of its faculties if acting without embarrassment. The one passion may be somewhat stronger than the other, and therefore just prevail barely enough to give a feeble impulse to the conduct of the man; a feebleness which will continue till there be a greater disparity between these rivals, in consequence of a reinforcement to the slightly ascendent one, by new impressions or the gradual strengthening of habit forming in its favor. The disparity must be no less than an absolute predominance of the one and subjection of the other, before the prevailing passion will have at liberty from the intestine conflict any large measure of its force to throw activity into the system of conduct. If, for instance, a man feels at once the love of fame, which is to be gained only by arduous exertions, and an equal degree of the love of ease or pleasure, which precludes those exertions; if he is eager to show off in splendor, and yet anxious to save money; if he has the curiosity of adventure, and yet that solicitude for safety, which forbids him to climb a precipice, descend into a cavern, or explore a dangerous wild; if he has the stern will of a tyrant, and yet the relings of a man; if he has the ambition to domineer over his fellow-mortals, counteracted by a reluctance to inflict so much mischief as it might cost to subdue them; we may anticipate the irresolute contradictory tenor of his actions. Especially if conscience, that great troubler of the human breast, loudly declares against a man's wishes or projects, it will be a fatal enemy to decision, till it either reclaim the delinquent passions, or be debauched or laid dead by them.

Lady Macbeth may be cited as a harmonious character, though the epithet seem strangely applied. She had capacity, ambition, and courage; and she willed the death of the king. Macbeth had still more capacity, ambition, and courage; and he also willed the murder of the king. But he had besides humanity, generosity, conscience, and some measure of what forms the *power* of conscience, the fear of a Superior Being. Consequently, when the dreadful moment approached, he felt an insupportable conflict between these opposite principles, and when it was arrived his utmost courage began to fail. The worst part of his nature

fell prostrate under the power of the better; the angel of goodness arrested the demon that grasped the dagger; and would have taken that dagger away, if the pure demoniac firmness of his wife, who had none of these counteracting principles, had not shamed and hardened him to the deed.

The poet's delineation of Richard III. offers a dreadful specimen of this indivisibility of mental impulse. After his determination was fixed, the whole mind, with the compactest fidelity, supported him in prosecuting it. Securely privileged from all interference of doubt that could linger, or humanity that could soften, or timidity that could shrink, he advanced with a concentrated constancy through scene after scene of atrocity, still fulfilling his vow to "cut his way through with a bloody axe." He did not waver while he pursued his object, nor relent when he seized it.

Cromwell (whom I mention as a parallel, of course not to Richard's wickedness, but to his inflexible vigor), lost his mental consistency in the latter end of a career which had displayed a superlative example of decision. It appears that the wish to be a king, at last arose in a mind which had contemned royalty, and battled it from the land. As far as he really had any republican principles and partialities, this new desire must have been a very untoward associate for them, and must have produced a schism in the breast where all the strong forces of thought and passion had acted till then in concord. The new form of ambition became just predominant enough to carry him, by slow degrees, through the embarrassment and the shame of this incongruity, into an irresolute determination to assume the crown; so irresolute, that he was reduced again to a mortifying indecision by the remonstrances of some of his friends, which he could have slighted, and by an apprehension of the public disapprobation, which he could have braved, if some of the principles of his own mind had not shrunk or revolted from the design. When at last the motives for relinquishing this design prevailed, it was by so small a degree of preponderance, that his reluctant refusal of the offered crown was the voice of only half his soul.

Not only two distinct counteracting passions, but one passion interested for two objects, both equally desirable, but of which the one must be sacrificed, may annihilate in that instance the possibility of a resolute promptitude of

conduct. I recollect reading in an old divine, a story from some historian, applicable to this remark. A father went to the agents of a tyrant, to endeavor to redeem his two sons, military men, who, with some other captives of war, were condemned to die. He offered, as a ransom, a sum of money, and to surrender his own life. The tyrant's agents who had them in charge, informed him that this equivalent would be accepted for one of his sons, and for one only, because they should be accountable for the execution of two persons; he might therefore choose which he would redeem. Anxious to save even one of them thus at the expense of his own life, he yet was unable to decide which should die, by choosing the other to live, and remained in the agony of this dilemma so long that they were both irreversibly ordered for execution.

LETTER V.

It were absurd to suppose that any human being can attain a state of mind capable of acting in all instances invariably with the full power of determination; but it is obvious that many have possessed a habitual and very commanding measure of it; and I think the preceding remarks have taken account of its chief characteristics and constituent principles. A number of additional observations remains.

The slightest view of human affairs shows what fatal and wide-spread mischief may be caused by men of this character, when misled or wicked. You have but to recollect the conquerors, despots, bigots, unjust conspirators, and signal villains of every class, who have blasted society by the relentless vigor which could act consistently and heroically wrong. Till, therefore, the virtue of mankind be greater, there is reason to be pleased that so few of them are endowed with extraordinary decision.

Even when dignified by wisdom and principle, this quality requires great care in the possessors of it to prevent its becoming unamiable. As it involves much practical assertion of superiority over other human beings, it should

he as temperate and conciliating as possible in manner; else pride will feel provoked, affection hurt, and weakness oppressed. But this is not the manner which will be most natural to such a man; rather it will be high-toned, laconic, and careless of pleasing. He will have the appearance of keeping himself always at a distance from social equality; and his friends will feel as if their friendship were continually sliding into subserviency; while his intimate connexions will think he does not attach the due importance either to their opinions or to their regard. His manner, when they differ from him, or complain, will be too much like the expression of slight estimation, and sometimes of disdain.

When he can accomplish a design by his own personal means alone, he may be disposed to separate himself to the work with the cold self-inclosed individuality on which no one has any hold, which seems to recognize no kindred being in the world, which takes little account of good wishes and kind concern, any more than it cares for opposition; which seeks neither aid nor sympathy, and seems to say, I do not want any of you, and I am glad that I do not; leave me alone to succeed or die. This has a very repellent effect on the friends who wished to feel themselves of some importance, in some way or other, to a person whom they are constrained to respect. When assistance is indispensable to his undertakings, his mode of signifying it will seem to command, rather than invite, the co-operation.

In consultation, his manner will indicate that when he is equally with the rest in possession of the circumstances of the case, he does not at all expect to hear any opinions that shall correct his own; but is satisfied that either his present conception of the subject is a just one, or that his own mind must originate that which shall be so. This difference will be apparent between him and his associates, that *their* manner of receiving *his* opinions is that of agreement or dissent; *his* manner of receiving *theirs* is judicial—that of sanction or rejection. He has the tone of authoritatively deciding on what they say, but never of submitting to decision what himself says. Their coincidence with his views does not give him a firmer assurance of his being right, nor their dissent any other impression than that of their incapacity to judge. If his feeling

took the distinct form of a reflection, it would be, Mine is the business of comprehending and devising, and I am here to rule this company, and not to consult them; I want their docility, and not their arguments; I am come, not to seek their assistance in thinking, but to determine their concurrence in executing what is already thought for them. Of course, many suggestions and reasons which appear important to those they come from, will be disposed of by him with a transient attention, or a light facility, that will seem very disrespectful to persons who possibly hesitate to admit that he is a demi-god, and that they are but idiots. Lord Chatham, in going out of the House of Commons, just as one of the speakers against him concluded his speech by emphatically urging what he perhaps rightly thought the unanswerable question, "*Where* can we find means to support such a war?" turned round a moment, and gaily chanted, "Gentle shepherd, tell me where?"

Even the assenting convictions, and practical compliances, yielded by degrees to this decisive man, may be somewhat undervalued; as they will appear to him no more than simply coming, and that very slowly, to a right apprehension; whereas *he* understood and decided justly from the first, and has been right all this while.

He will be in danger of rejecting the just claims of charity for a little tolerance to the prejudices, hesitation, and timidity of those with whom he has to act. He will say to himself, I wish there were anything like manhood among the beings called men; and that they could have the sense and spirit not to let themselves be hampered by so many silly notions and childish fears! Why cannot they either determine with some promptitude, or let me, that can, do it for them? Am I to wait till debility become strong, and folly wise? If full scope be allowed to these tendencies, they may give too much of the character of a tyrant to even a man of elevated virtue, since, in the consciousness of the right intention, and the assurance of the wise contrivance, of his designs, he will hold himself justified in being regardless of everything but the accomplishment of them. He will forget all respect for the feelings and liberties of beings who are accounted but a subordinate machinery, to be actuated, or to be thrown

aside when not actuated, by the spring of his commanding spirit.

I have before asserted that this strong character *may* be exhibited with a mildness, or at least, temperance of manner; and that, generally, it will thus best secure its efficacy. But this mildness must often be at the cost of great effort; and how much considerate policy or benevolent forbearance it will require, for a man to exert his utmost vigor in the very task, as it will appear to him at the time, of cramping that vigor! Lycurgus appears to have been a high example of conciliating patience in the resolute prosecution of designs to be effected among a perverse multitude.

It is probable that the men most distinguished for decision have not in general possessed a large share of tenderness; and it is easy to imagine, that the laws of our nature will, with great difficulty, allow the combination of the refined sensibilities with a hard, never-shrinking, never-yielding firmness. Is it not almost of the essence of this temperament to be free from even the *perception* of such impressions as cause a mind, weak through susceptibility, to relax or waver; just as the skin of the elephant, or the armor of the rhinoceros, would be but indistinctly sensible to the application of a force by which a small animal, with a skin of thin and delicate texture, would be pierced or lacerated to death? No doubt this firmness consists partly in a commanding and repressive power over feelings, but it may consist fully as much in not having them. To be exquisitely alive to gentle impressions, and yet to be able to preserve, when the prosecution of a design requires it, an immovable heart amidst the most imperious causes of subduing emotion, is perhaps not an impossible constitution of mind, but it must be the rarest endowment of humanity.

If you take a view of the first rank of decisive men, you will observe that their faculties have been too much bent to arduous effort, their souls have been kept in too military an attitude, they have been begirt with too much iron, for the melting movements of the heart. Their whole being appears too much arrogated and occupied by the spirit of severe design, urging them toward some defined end, to be sufficiently at ease for the indolent com-

placency, the soft lassitude of gentle affections, which love to surrender themselves to the present felicities, forgetful of all "enterprises of great pith and moment." The man seems rigorously intent still on his own affairs, as he walks, or regales, or mingles with domestic society; and appears to despise all the feelings that will not take rank with the grave labors and decisions of intellect, or coalesce with the unremitting passion which is his spring of action; he values not feelings which he cannot employ either as weapons or as engines. He loves to be actuated by a passion so strong as to compel into exercise the utmost force of his being, and fix him in a tone, compared with which, the gentle affections, if he had felt them, would be accounted tameness, and their exciting causes insipidity.

Yet we cannot willingly admit that those gentle affections are totally incompatible with the most impregnable resolution and vigor; nor can we help believing that such men as Timoleon, Alfred, and Gustavus Adolphus, must have been very fascinating associates in private and domestic life, whenever the urgency of their affairs would allow them to withdraw from the interests of statesmen and warriors, to indulge the affections of men: most fascinating, for, with relations or friends who had any right perceptions, an effect of the strong character would be recognized in a peculiar charm imparted by it to the gentle moods and seasons. The firmness and energy of the man whom nothing could subdue, would exalt the quality of the tenderness which softened him to recline.

But it were much easier to enumerate a long train of ancient and modern examples of the vigor unmitigated by the sensibility. Perhaps, indeed, these indomitable spirits have yielded sometimes to some species of love, as a mode of amusing their passions for an interval, till greater engagements have summoned them into their proper element; when they have shown how little the sentiment was an element of the heart, by the ease with which they could relinquish the temporary favorite. In other cases, where there have not been the selfish inducements, which this passion supplies, to the exhibition of something like softness, and where they have been left to the trial of what they might feel of the sympathies of humanity in their simplicity, no rock on earth could be harder.

The celebrated King of Prussia occurs to me as a capital

instance of the decisive character; and there occurs to me, at the same time, one of the anecdotes related of him.* Intending to make, in the night, an important movement in his camp, which was in sight of the enemy, he gave orders that by eight o'clock all the lights in the camp should be put out, on pain of death. The moment that the time was passed, he walked out himself to see whether all were dark. He found a light in the tent of a Captain Zietern, which he entered just as the officer was folding up a letter. Zietern knew him, and instantly fell on his knees to entreat his mercy. The king asked to whom he had been writing; he said it was a letter to his wife, which he had retained the candle these few minutes beyond the time in order to finish. The king coolly ordered him to rise, and write one line more, which he should dictate. This line was to inform his wife, without any explanation, that by such an hour the next day he should be a dead man. The letter was then sealed, and dispatched as it had been intended; and, the next day, the captain was executed. I say nothing of the justice of the punishment itself; but this cool barbarity to the affection both of the officer and his wife, proved how little the decisive hero and reputed philosopher was capable of the tender affections, or of sympathizing with their pains.

At the same time, it is proper to observe, that the case may easily occur, in which a man, sustaining a high responsibility, *must* be resolute to act in a manner which may make him appear to want the finer feelings. He may be placed under the necessity of doing what he knows will cause pain to persons of a character to feel it severely. He may be obliged to resist affectionate wishes, expostulations, entreaties, and tears. Take this same instance. Suppose the wife of Zietern had come to supplicate for him, not only the remission of the punishment of death, but an exemption from any other severe punishment,

* The authenticity of this anecdote, which I read in some trifling fugitive publication many years since, has been questioned. Possibly enough it might be one of the many stories only half true, which could not fail to go abroad concerning a man who made, in his day, so great a figure. But as it does not at all misrepresent the general character of his mind, since there are many incontrovertible facts, proving against him as great a degree of cruelty as this anecdote would charge on him, the want of means to prove this one fact does not seem to impose any necessity for omitting the illustration.

which was perhaps justly due to the violation of such an order, issued no doubt for important reasons; it had then probably been the duty and the virtue of the commander to deny the most interesting suppliant, and to resist the most pathetic appeals which could have been made to his feelings.

LETTER VI.

VARIOUS circumstances might be specified as adapted to confirm such a character as I have attempted to describe. I shall notice two or three.

And first, *opposition*. The passions which inspirit men to resistance, and sustain them in it, such as anger, indignation, and resentment, are evidently far stronger than those which have reference to friendly objects; and if any of these strong passions are frequently excited by opposition, they infuse a certain quality into the general temperament of the mind, which remains after the immediate excitement is passed. They continually strengthen the principle of re-action; they put the mind in the habitual array of defense and self-assertion, and often give it the aspect and the posture of a gladiator, when there appears no confronting combatant. When these passions are provoked in such a person as I describe, it is probable that each excitement is followed by a greater increase of this principle of re-action than in other men, because this result is so congenial with his naturally resolute disposition. Let him be opposed then, throughout the prosecution of one of his designs, or in the general tenor of his actions, and this constant opposition would render him the service of an ally, by augmenting the resisting and defying power of his mind. An irresolute spirit indeed might be quelled and subjugated by a formidable and persisting opposition; but the strong wind which blows out a taper, exasperates a powerful fire (if there be fuel enough) to an indefinite intensity. It would be found, in fact, on a recollection of instances, that many of the persons most conspicuous for decision, have been exercised and forced to this high tone of spirit in having to make their way through opposition

and contest; a discipline under which they were wrought to both a prompt acuteness of faculty, and an inflexibility of temper, hardly attainable even by minds of great natural strength, if brought forward into the affairs of life under indulgent auspices, and in habits of easy and friendly coincidence with those around them. Often, however, it is granted, the firmness matured by such discipline is, in a man of virtue, accompanied with a Catoic severity, and in a mere man of the world is an inhumanized repulsive hardness.

Desertion may be another cause conducive to the consolidation of this character. A kind, mutually reclining dependence, is certainly for the happiness of human beings; but this necessarily prevents the development of some great individual powers which would be forced into action by a state of abandonment. I lately happened to notice, with some surprise, an ivy, which finding nothing to cling to beyond a certain point, had shot off into a bold, elastic stem, with an air of as much independence as any branch of oak in the vicinity. So a human being thrown, whether by cruelty, justice, or accident, from all social support or kindness, if he have any vigor of spirit, and be not in the bodily debility of either childhood or age, will begin, to act for himself with a resolution which will appear like a new faculty. And the most absolute inflexibility is likely to characterize the resolution of an individual who is obliged to deliberate without consultation, and execute without assistance. He will disdain to yield to beings who have rejected him, or to forego a particle of his designs or advantages in concession to the opinions or the will of all the world. Himself, his pursuits, and his interests, are emphatically his own. "The world is not his friend, nor the world's law;" and therefore he becomes regardless of everything but its power, of which his policy carefully takes the measure, in order to ascertain his own means of action and impunity, as set against the world's means of annoyance, prevention, and retaliation.

If this person have but little humanity or principle, he will become a misanthrope, or perhaps a villain, who will resemble a solitary wild beast of the night, which makes prey of everything it can overpower, and cares for nothing but fire. If he be capable of grand conception and enterprise, he may, like Spartacus, make a daring attempt

against the whole social order of the state where he has been oppressed. If he be of great humanity and principle, he may become one of the noblest of mankind, and display a generous virtue to which society had no claim, and which it is not worthy to reward, if it should at last become inclined. No, he will say, give your rewards to another; as it has been no part of my object to gain them, they are not necessary to my satisfaction. I have done good, without expecting your gratitude, and without caring for your approbation. If conscience and my Creator had not been more auspicious than you, none of these virtues would ever have opened to the day. When I ought to have been an object of your compassion, I might have perished; now, when you find I can serve your interests, you will affect to acknowledge me and reward me; but I will abide by my destiny to verify the principle that virtue is its own reward. In either case, virtuous or wicked, the man who has been compelled to do without assistance, will spurn interference.

Common life would supply illustrations of the effect of desertion, in examples of some of the most resolute men having become such partly from being left friendless in early life. The case has also sometimes happened, that a wife and mother, remarkable perhaps for gentleness and acquiescence before, has been compelled, after the death of her husband on whom she depended, and when she has met with nothing but neglect or unkindness from relations and those who had been accounted friends, to adopt a plan of her own, and has executed it with a resolution which has astonished even herself.

One regrets that the signal examples, real or fictitious, that most readily present themselves, are still of the depraved order. I fancy myself to see Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage, where no arch or column, that remained unshaken amidst the desolation, could present a stronger image of a firmness beyond the power of disaster to subdue. The rigid constancy which had before distinguished his character, would be aggravated by its finding himself thus an outcast from all human society; and he would probably shake off every sentiment that had ever for an instant checked his designs in the way of reminding him of social obligations. The lonely individual was placed in the alternative of becoming the victim or the antagonist of the power of the

empire. While, with a spirit capable of confronting that power, he resolved, amidst those ruins, on a great experiment, he would enjoy a kind of sullen luxury in surveying the dreary situation into which he was driven, and recollecting the circumstance of his expulsion; since they would seem to him to sanction an unlimited vengeance; to present what had been his country as the pure legitimate prize for desperate achievement; and to give him a proud consequence in being reduced to maintain singly a mortal quarrel against the bulk of mankind. He would exult that the very desolation of his condition rendered but the more complete the proof of his possessing a mind which no misfortunes could repress or intimidate, and that it kindled an animosity intense enough to force that mind from firm endurance into impetuous action. He would feel that he became stronger for enterprise, in proportion as his exile and destitution rendered him more inexorable; and the sentiment with which he quitted his solitude would be—Rome expelled her patriot, let her receive her evil genius.

The decision of Satan, in *Paradise Lost*, is represented as consolidated by his reflections on his hopeless banishment from heaven, which oppress him with sadness for some moments, but he soon resumes his invincible spirit, and utters the impious but sublime sentiment,

“What matter where, if *I* be still the same?”

You remember how this effect of desertion is represented in Charles de Moor.* His father's supposed cruel rejection consigned him irretrievably to the career of atrocious enterprise, in which, notwithstanding the most interesting emotions of humanity and tenderness, he persisted with heroic determination till he considered his destiny as accomplished.

Success tends considerably to reinforce this commanding quality. It is true that a man possessing it in a high degree will not lose it by occasional failure; for if the failure was caused by something entirely beyond the reach of human knowledge and ability, he will remember that fortitude is the virtue required in meeting unfavorable

* A wildly extravagant, certainly, but most imposing and gigantic character in Schiller's tragedy, *The Robbers*.

events which in no sense depended on him; if by something which *might* have been known and prevented, he will feel that even the experience of failure completes his competence, by admonishing his prudence, and enlarging his understanding. But as schemes and measures of action, rightly adjusted to their proposed ends, will generally attain them, continual failure would show something essentially wrong in a man's system, and destroy his confidence, or else expose it as mere absurdity or obstinacy. On the contrary, when a man has ascertained by experiment the justness of his calculations and the extent of his powers, when he has measured his force with various persons, when he has braved and vanquished difficulty, and partly seized the prize, he will carry forward the result of all this in an intrepid self-sufficiency for whatever may yet await him.

In some men, whose lives have been spent in constant perils, continued success has produced a confidence beyond its rational effect, by inspiring a presumption that the common laws of human affairs were, in their case, superseded by the decrees of a peculiar destiny, securing them from almost the possibility of disaster; and this superstitious feeling, though it has displaced the unconquerable resolution from its rational basis, has often produced the most wonderful effects. This dictated Cæsar's expression to the mariner who was terrified at the storm and billows, "What art thou afraid of? thy vessel carries Cæsar." The brave men in the times of the English Commonwealth were, some of them, indebted in a degree for their magnanimity to this idea of a special destination, entertained as a religious sentiment.

The willfulness of an obstinate person is sometimes fortified by some single instance of remarkable success in his undertakings, which is promptly recalled in every case where his decisions are questioned or opposed, as a proof, or ground of just presumption, that he must in this instance too be right; especially if that one success happened contrary to your predictions.

I shall only add, and without illustration, that the habit of associating with *inferiors*, among whom a man can always, and therefore does always, take the precedence and give the law, is conducive to a subordinate, coarse kind of decision of character. You may see this exemplified any

day in an ignorant country 'squire among his vassals; especially if he wear the lordly superaddition of Justice of the Peace.

In viewing the characters and actions of the men who have possessed in imperial eminence the quality which I have attempted to describe, one cannot but wish it were possible to know how much of this mighty superiority was created by the circumstances in which they were placed; but it is inevitable to believe that there was some vast intrinsic difference from ordinary men in the original constitutional structure of the mind. In observing lately a man who appeared too vacant almost to think of a purpose, too indifferent to resolve upon it, and too sluggish to execute it if he had resolved, I was distinctly struck with the idea of the distance between him and Marius, of whom I happened to have been reading; and it was infinitely beyond my power to believe that any circumstances on earth, though ever so perfectly combined and adapted, would have produced in this man, if placed under their fullest influence from his childhood, any resemblance (unless, perhaps, the courage to enact a diminutive imitation in revenge and cruelty) of the formidable Roman.

It is needless to discuss whether a person who is practically evinced, at the age of maturity, to want the stamina of this character, can, by any process, acquire it. Indeed, such a person cannot have sufficient force of *will* to make the complete experiment. If there were the unconquerable *will* that would persist to seize all possible means, and apply them in order to attain, if I may so express it, this stronger mode of active existence, it would prove the possession already of a high degree of the character sought; and if there is not this *will*, how then is its supposed attainment possible?

Yet though it is improbable that a very irresolute man can ever become a habitual decisive one, it should be observed, that since there are *degrees* of this powerful quality, and since the essential principles of it, when partially existing in those degrees, cannot be supposed subject to definite and ultimate limitation, like the dimension of the bodily stature, it might be possible to apply a discipline which should advance a man from the lowest degree to the next, from that to the third, and how much further, it will be worth his trying if his first successful expire-

ments have not cost more in the efforts for making the attainment than he judges likely to be repaid by any good he shall gain from its exercise. I have but a very imperfect conception of the discipline; but will suggest a hint or two.

In the first place, the indispensable necessity of a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the concerns before us, seems too obvious for remark; and yet no man has been sufficiently sensible of it, till he has been placed in circumstances which forced him to act before he had time, or after he had made ineffectual efforts, to obtain the needful information and understanding. The pain of having brought things to an unfortunate issue, is hardly greater than that of proceeding in the conscious ignorance which continually threatens such an issue. While thus proceeding at hazard, under some compulsion which makes it impossible for him to remain in inaction, a man looks round for information as eagerly as a benighted wanderer would for the light of a human dwelling. He perhaps labors to recall what he thinks he once heard or read as relating to a similar situation, without dreaming at that time that such instruction could ever come to be of importance to him; and is distressed to find his best recollection so indistinct as to be useless. He would give a considerable sum, if some particular book could be brought to him at the instant; or a certain document which he believes to be in existence; or the detail of a process, the terms of a prescription, or the model of an implement. He thinks how many people know, without its being of any present use to them, exactly what could be of such important service to him, if he could know it. In some cases, a line, a sentence, a monosyllable of affirming or denying, or a momentary sight of an object, would be inexpressibly valuable and welcome. And he resolves that if he can once happily escape from the present difficulty, he will apply himself day and night to obtain knowledge not concerning one particular matter only, but divers others, in provision against possible emergencies, rather than be so involved and harassed again. It might really be of service to have been occasionally forced to act under the disadvantage of conscious ignorance (if the affair was not so important as to allow the consequence to be very injurious) as an effectual lesson on the necessity of knowledge in order to deci-

sion either of plan or execution. It must indeed be an extreme case that will compel a considerate man to act in the absence of knowledge; yet he may sometimes be necessitated to proceed to action, when he is sensible his information is far from extending to the whole of the concern in which he is going to commit himself. And in this case, he will feel no little uneasiness, while transacting that part of it in which his knowledge is competent, when he looks forward to the point where that knowledge terminates; unless he be conscious of possessing an exceedingly prompt faculty of catching information at the moment he wants it for use; as Indians set out on a long journey with but a trifling stock of provisions, because they are sure that their bows or guns will procure it by the way. It is one of the nicest points of wisdom to decide how much less than complete knowledge, in any question of practical interest, will warrant a man to venture on an undertaking, in the presumption that the deficiency will be supplied in time to prevent either perplexity or disaster.

A thousand familiar instances show the effect of complete knowledge on determination. An artisan may be said to be decisive as to the mode of working a piece of iron or wood, because he is certain of the proper process and the effect. A man perfectly acquainted with the intricate paths of a woodland district, takes the right one without a moment's hesitation; while a stranger, who has only some very vague information, is lost in perplexity. It is easy to imagine what a number of circumstances may occur in the course of a life, or even of a year, in which a man cannot thus readily determine, and thus confidently proceed without a compass and an exactness of knowledge which few persons have application enough to acquire. And it would be frightful to know to what extent human interests are committed to the direction of ignorance. What a consolatory doctrine is that of a particular Providence!

In connexion with the necessity of knowledge, I would suggest the importance of cultivating, with the utmost industry, a conclusive manner of thinking. In the first place, let the general course of thinking partake of the nature of *reasoning*; and let it be remembered that this name does not belong to a series of thoughts and fancies which follow one another without deduction or dependence, and which can therefore no more bring a subject to a pro-

per issue, than a number of separate links will answer the mechanical purpose of a chain. The conclusion which terminates such a series, does not deserve the name of *result* or *conclusion*, since it has little more than a casual connexion with what went before; the conclusion might as properly have taken place at an earlier point of the train, or have been deferred till that train had been extended much further. Instead of having been busily employed in this kind of thinking, for perhaps many hours, a man might possibly as well have been sleeping all the time; since the single thought which is now to determine his conduct, might have happened to be the first thought that occurred to him on awaking. It only *happens* to occur to him now; it does not follow from what he has been thinking these hours; at least, he cannot prove that some other thought might not just as appropriately have come in its place at the end, and to make an end, of this long series. It is easy to see how feeble that determination is likely to be, which is formed on so narrow a ground as the last accidental idea that comes into the mind, or on so loose a ground as this crude uncombined assemblage of ideas. Indeed it is difficult to form a determination at all on such slight ground. A man delays, and waits for some more satisfactory thought to occur to him; and perhaps he has not waited long, before an idea arises in his mind of a quite contrary tendency to the last. As this additional idea is not, more than that which preceded it, the result of any process of reasoning, nor brings with it any arguments, it may be expected to give place soon to another, and still another; and they are all in succession of equal authority, that is properly of none. If at last an idea occurs to him which seems of considerable authority, he may here make a stand, and adopt his resolution, with firmness, as he thinks, and commence the execution. But still, if he cannot see *whence* the principle which has determined him derives its authority—on what it holds for that authority—his resolution is likely to prove treacherous and evanescent in any serious trial. A principle so little verified by sound reasoning, is not *terra firma* for a man to trust himself upon; it is only as a slight incrustation on a yielding element; it is like the sand compacted into a thin surface on the lake Serbonis, which broke away under the unfortunate army which had begun to advance on it, mis-

taking it for solid ground. These remarks may seem to refer only to a *single instance* of deliberation; but they are equally applicable to all the deliberations and undertakings of a man's life; the same connected manner of thinking, which is so necessary to give firmness of determination and of conduct in a particular instance, will, if habitual, greatly contribute to form a decisive character.

Not only should thinking be thus reduced, by a strong and patient discipline, to a train or process, in which all the parts at once depend upon and support one another, but also this train should be followed on to a full conclusion. It should be held as a law generally in force, that the question must be disposed of before it is let alone. The mind may carry on this accurate process to some length, and then stop through indolence, or start away through levity; but it can never possess that rational confidence in its opinions which is requisite to the character in question, till it is conscious of acquiring them from an exercise of thought continued on to its result. The habit of thinking thus completely is indispensable to the general character of decision; and in any particular instance, it is found that short pieces of courses of reasoning, though correct as far as they go, are inadequate to make a man master of the immediate concern. They are besides of little value for aid to future thinking; because from being left thus incomplete they are but slightly retained by the mind, and soon sink away; in the same manner as the walls of a structure left unfinished speedily moulder.

After these remarks, I should take occasion to observe, that a vigorous exercise of thought may sometimes for a while seem to increase the difficulty of decision, by discovering a great number of unthought-of reasons for a measure and against it, so that the most discriminating mind may, during a short space, find itself in the state of the magnetic needle under the equator. But no case in the world can really have a perfect equality of opposite reasons; nor will it long appear to have it, in the estimate of a clear and well-disciplined intellect, which after some time will ascertain, though the difference is small, which side of the question has ten, and which has but nine. At any rate, this is the mind to come nearest in the approximation.

Another thing that would powerfully assist toward complete decision, both in the particular instance, and in

the general spirit of the character, is for a man to place himself in a situation analogous to that in which Cæsar placed his soldiers, when he burnt the ships which brought them to land. If his judgment is *really* decided, let him commit himself irretrievably, by doing something which shall oblige him to do more, which shall lay on him the necessity of doing all. If a man resolves as a general intention to be a philanthropist, I would say to him, Form some actual plan of philanthropy, and begin the execution of it to-morrow (if I may not say *to-day*) so explicitly that you cannot relinquish it without becoming degraded even in your own estimation. If a man would be a hero, let him, if it be possible to find a good cause in arms, go presently to the camp. If a man is desirous of a travelling adventure through distant countries, and deliberately approves both his purpose and his scheme, let him actually prepare to set off. Let him not still dwell, in imagination, on mountains, rivers, and temples; but give directions about his remittances, his personal equipments, or the carriage, or the vessel, in which he is to go. Ledyard surprised the official person who asked him how soon he could be ready to set off for the interior of Africa, by replying promptly and firmly, "To-morrow."

Again, it is highly conducive to a manly firmness, that the interests in which it is exerted should be of a dignified order, so as to give the passions an ample scope, and a noble object. The degradation they suffer in being devoted to mean and trivial pursuits, often perceived to be such in spite of every fallacy of the imagination, would in general, I should think, also debilitate their energy, and therefore preclude strength of character, to which nothing can be more adverse, than to have the fire of the passions damped by the mortification of feeling contempt for the object, as often as its meanness is betrayed by failure of the delusion which invests it.

And finally, I would repeat that one should think a man's own conscientious approbation of his conduct must be of vast importance to his decision in the outset, and his persevering constancy; and I would attribute it to defect of memory that a greater proportion of the examples, introduced for illustration in this essay, do not exhibit goodness in union with the moral and intellectual power so conspicuous in the quality described. Certainly a bright con-

stellation of such examples might be displayed ; yet it is the mortifying truth that much the greater number of men pre-eminent for decision, have been such as could not have their own serious approbation, except through an utter perversion of judgment or abolition of conscience. And it is melancholy to contemplate beings represented in our imagination as of adequate power (when they possessed great external means to give effect to the force of their minds), for the grandest utility, for vindicating each good cause which has languished in a world adverse to all goodness, and for intimidating the collective vices of a nation or an age—to contemplate such beings as becoming themselves the mighty exemplars, giants, and champions of those vices ; and it is fearful to follow them in thought, from this region, of which not all the powers and difficulties and inhabitants together could have subdued their adamant resolution, to the Supreme Tribunal where that resolution must tremble and melt away.

FOSTER'S THOUGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

EXISTENCE, ATTRIBUTES, WORKS AND PROVIDENCE, OF GOD.

1. *Any order of serious reflection leads to God.*—THE thought of virtue would suggest the thought of both a lawgiver and a rewarder ; the thought of crime, of an avenger ; the thought of sorrow, of a consoler ; the thought of an inscrutable mystery, of an intelligence that understands it ; the thought of that ever-moving activity which prevails in the system of the universe, of a supreme agent ; the thought of the human family, of a great father ; the thought of all being not necessary and self-existent, of a creator ; the thought of life, of a preserver ; and the thought of death, of an uncontrollable disposer. By what dexterity, therefore, of irreligious caution, did you avoid precisely every track where the idea of him would have met you, or elude that idea if it came ? And what must sound reason pronounce of a mind which, in the train of millions of thoughts, has wandered to all things under the sun, to all the permanent objects or vanishing appearances in the creation, but never fixed its thought on the Supreme Reality ; never approached, like Moses, “to see this great sight ?”

2. *Omnipresence mysteriously veiled.*—Oh why is it so possible that this greatest inhabitant of every

place where men are living should be the last whose society they seek, or of whose being constantly near them they feel the importance? Why is it possible to be surrounded with the intelligent Reality, which exists wherever we are, with attributes that are infinite, and not feel, respecting all other things which may be attempting to press on our minds and affect their character, as if they retained with difficulty their shadows of existence, and were continually on the point of vanishing into nothing? Why is this stupendous Intelligence so retired and silent, while present, in all the scenes of the earth, and in all the paths and abodes of men! Why does he keep his glory invisible behind the shades and visions of the material world? Why does not this latest glory sometimes beam forth with such a manifestation as could never be forgotten, nor ever be remembered without an emotion of religious fear?

3. *Enlarged conception of the Deity.*—How all little systematic forms of theology vanish from the soul in the sublime endeavor to recognize, amid his own amazing works, *the Deity of the universe!*—that is, to form such an idea of him as shall be felt to be worthy to represent the Creator and preserving Governor of such a scene.

4. *Overawing sense of God's omniscience.*—How is it possible to forget the solicitude which should accompany the consciousness that such a being is continually darting upon us the beams of observant thought (if we may apply such a term to Omniscience); that we are exposed to the piercing inspection compared to which the concentrated attention of all the beings in the universe besides would be but as the powerless gaze of an infant? Why is faith, that faculty of spiritual apprehension, so absent, or so incomparably more slow and reluctant to receive a just perception of the grandest of its objects, than the senses are adapted to receive the impressions of

theirs? While there is a Spirit pervading the universe with an infinite energy of being, why have the few particles of dust which enclose *our* spirits the power to intercept all sensible communication with it, and to place them as in a vacuity, where the sacred Essence had been precluded or extinguished?

5. *A contemplation of God as a Spirit—invisible in his presence, adapted to awaken awe and apprehension.*—Much is seeing, feeling man actuated by the objects around him. All his powers are roused, impelled, directed, by impressions made on his sensitive organs; yet objects of sense have only a definite force upon him. A hundred weight crushes a man's strength to a certain degree, and no more: he sustains and bears it away. On the edge of the ocean he may tremble at the vast expanse, but he tries the depth near the shore, and finds it but a few feet, and no longer fears to enter it. The waves can not overtop his head; or, is it deep?—he can swim, and no longer regards it with fear. Nay, he builds a ship, and makes this tremendous ocean his servant, wields its vastness for his own use, dives to its deep bottom to rob it of its treasures, or makes its surface convey him to distant shores. A much smaller object shall affect him more, when his senses are less distinctly acted upon, but his imagination is somewhat aroused. When he travels in the dark, he starts at a slight but indistinct noise; he knows not but it may be a wild beast lurking, or a robber ready to seize on him. Could he have distinctly seen what alarmed him, he had undauntedly passed on; it was only the moving of the leaves waved gently by the wind. He stops, he considers well, for he hears the sound of water falling; a gleam from its foaming surface sparkles in his eye, but he can not tell how near to it, or how distant; how exactly it might be in his path; how tremendously deep the abyss into which he may fall at the next step. Had it been daylight, could he

have examined it thoroughly, he had then passed it without notice ; it is only the rill of a small ditch in the roadside ; his own foot could have stopped the trickling current. This effect of indistinctness rousing the imagination is finely depicted in Job iv. 14. Eliphaz describes it thus : " Fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face ; the hair of my flesh stood up : it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof." The senses in this description are but slightly affected : the eye could not discern any specific form, the touch could not examine the precise nature of the object ; the imagination therefore had full scope, the mind was roused beyond the power of sensible objects to stimulate it, and the body felt an agitation greater than if its senses had been more fully acted upon. " He trembled, the hairs of his flesh stood up. He could not discern the form," it might therefore be terrific in its shape or tremendous in its size. " It stood still," as if to do something to him ; to speak ; perhaps to smite or to destroy ! And how could he guard against that which he could not see, could not tell whence or what it was ; that which, from what he could discover, and still more from what he could not discover, seemed to be no mortal substance to which he was accustomed, and with which, with cares and courage, he might deal safely ; but a spirit utterly beyond his impression, having unknown power to impress even him, who can tell in what degree ? The certainty of an object so near him, joined to the uncertainty of what might be his powers, intentions, and natural operations, impressed him deeply with awe, expectation, and anxiety. How absurd, then, how contrary to all their feelings in other cases, is the conduct of infidels who affect to despise God—to deny his existence because they can not see him—or, without affecting this, do actually forget and do him despise,

by occasion of this circumstance ! men who can be appalled at some distant danger, and grow courageous at what is near at hand—who trembled at a fellow-man, or crawling reptile, and only show hardihood when their foe is Almighty.

Without inquiring what Eliphaz saw, let us apply these ideas to the Supreme Being ; let us meditate on an object of infinitely greater, nearer importance—"the invisible God," the most impressively important because invisible. Let us, for a moment, suppose the contrary to be the case : suppose the Deity to be the object of our senses—he then loses much of his majesty ; he becomes fixed to one spot, that in which *we* can see him. He must be distant from many other places, and when revealing himself in other places, must be far distant from us, even at a time when we most need his presence. Nay, we should begin to compute him ; to philosophize upon and attempt experiments with him. Were he vast as the starry heavens, we could measure him ; bright as yonder sun, we could contrive to gaze at him ; energetic as the vivid lightning, we could bring him down to play around us. In no form can we conceive of his being an object of sense, but we sink him to a creature ; give him some definable shape, reduce him to a man or mere idol, and we have need to provide him a temple made with hands for his accommodation. If, indeed, there were any doubt of his existence (but that man is incapable of reasoning who reasons thus), there are proofs enough that he is at our right hand, though we do not see him ; that he works at our left hand, though we can not behold him. Instead of asking, with a sneer of doubt, "Where is he ?" or carelessly thinking thus, "Shall God see ?" a much more rational method is with awe and reverence to say, "Whither shall I flee from thy presence ? thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me." Could any supposition take place even

of his momentary absence—that he was far off, or on a journey, or asleep, and must needs be awakened—it might be alleged to sanction the careless, provided they were aware of his absence, or knew the time of his drowsiness or distance ; but an omnipresent Almighty ought to fill us with seriousness, and the uncertainty of his operations, when, how, and where he will work, should fill us with deep, lasting, and constant awe. He exists : the thought makes a temple in every place I may be in ; to realize it, is to begin actual worship ; whatever I may be about, to indulge it is to make all other existence fade away. Amid the roar of mirth I hear only his voice ; in the glitter of dissipation I see only his brightness ; in the midst of business I can do nothing but pray. He is present ! what may he not see ? The actions of my hands he beholds ! the voice of my words he hears ! the thoughts of my heart he discerns ! Could I see him, I might on this side guard against his penetrating eye, or on the other side act something in secret, safe from his inspection ; but present, without my being able to discern him, I ought to be watchful every way ; the slightest error may fill us with awful apprehensions. Even now, says conscience, he may be preparing his vengeance, whetting his glittering sword, or drawing to a head the arrows of destruction. Could my eye see his movements, I might be upon my guard ; might flee to some shelter, or shrink away from the blow ; but, a foe so near, and yet so indiscernible, may well alarm me, lest the act of iniquity meet with an immediate reward ; the blasphemous prayer for damnation receive too ready an answer from his hot thunderbolt ! He is a Spirit : what can he not do ? Vast are his powers, quick his discernments, invisible his operations ! No sword can reach him, no shield of brass can protect against him, no placid countenance deceive him, no hypocritical supplications impose upon him. He is in my inmost

thoughts—in every volition ; he supports the negotiating principle while it determines on its rebellions, or plans some mode by which to elude his all-penetrating perception. Vain is every attempt at evasion or resistance. “ God is a Spirit ;” is present every moment, surrounds every object, watches my steps and waits upon me, though I can not discern his form, his measure, his power, or direct his movements. I see him before my face in the bright walks of nature, but I can not discern his form. The rich landscape shows him good, wise, and bounteous : but how bounteous, good, or wise, who, from the richest landscape, can be able to guess ? The brilliant sun gives a glimpse of his brightness ; the vast starry concave shows his immensity ; but how bright, how immense, it were impossible to say. Hark ! he speaks in that bursting thunder, or he moves in that crushing earthquake, he shines in that blazing comet. So much I can easily discern, but God is still far beyond my comprehension. I see nothing but the hidings of his power ; himself is still unknown.

He guides the affairs of providence. I see him before my face, but I can not behold his form. Who but he could have raised Pharaoh—the Nebuchadnezzar of ancient or modern times ? Who but he could have rooted up a firmly-fixed throne, and poised a mighty nation upon the slender point of a stripling’s energies ? I have seen him pass before me in my own concerns, leading me in a path I did not know, stopping me when on the verge of some destruction, filling my exhausted stores, and soothing my wearied mind to sweet serenity. I could not but say, “ This is the Lord’s doing, it is marvellous in my eyes ;” but I can not discern the form ; I know not what he will next do, nor dare I walk with presumptuous steps, or repose with self-complacent gratulation, and say, “ My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved.”

He hides his face for a moment, and I am troubled ; he withdraws his hand, and I die.

I see a spirit passing before me, I hear his voice in the secret recesses ; I find that there is a God, that he is near, that he stands full in view, with appalling indistinctness, so that I tremble, and the hairs of my flesh stand up : yet I can not discern the form. I know not what affrights, stops impresses, crushes me. Company I hate, for it neither dispels my sensations, nor harmonizes with them. Solitude I dread ; for the invisible presence is there seen, and the unknown God is there felt in all his terrifying influence. To deny that some one is acting upon me, must be to deny that I see, feel, am anxious. Could I tell what, or who, I might call the wisdom of man to my assistance ; but it is the unknowable, yet well known ; the indiscernible, yet surely seen ; the incomprehensible, intangible, yet fully understood and ever-present God, that supports my trembling frame, and meets the warmest wishes of my too-daring mind ; the resolute determinations, inefficacious exertions, and the stubborn submission of an unwilling soul. Ah ! let this present Invisible encircle me with his mercy, defend me with his power, fill me with his fear, and save me by his almighty grace. Then, though I discern not his form, I shall be conscious of his presence, and the delightful consciousness shall fill me with reverence indeed, but not make my flesh to tremble. He shall sooth my sorrows, inspire my hopes, give me confidence in danger, and supplies in every necessity. The consciousness of his nearness, approbation, and mercy, shall enable me to endure like Moses, as seeing Him who is INVISIBLE.

6. *Attempt to escape the Divine presence vain and presumptuous.*—When we withdraw from human intercourse into solitude, we are more peculiarly committed in the presence of the Divinity ; yet some men retire into solitude to devise or perpetrate crimes.

This is like a man going to meet and brave a lion in his own gloomy desert, in the very precincts of his dread abode.

7. *Grandeur and glory of God reflected from his works.*—What is it, we would ask, that comes upon us in those beams—in the beams of those luminaries which are beheld by the naked eye, next of those countless myriads beheld by the assisted eye, and then of those infinite legions which can never be revealed to the earth, but are seen by an elevated imagination, and will perhaps burst with sudden and awful effulgence on the departed spirit? What is it, but the pure unmingled reflection of Him who can not be beheld in himself, who, present to all things, is yet in the darkness of infinite and eternal mystery, subsisting in an essence unparticipated, unapproached by gradation of other beings, impalpable to all speculation, refined beyond angelic perception, foreign from all analogy—but who condescends to become visible in the *effects* of his nature, in the lustre of his works?

8. *The universe a type,—a symbol of the greatness and glory of the Supreme.*—The universe, with all its splendors and magnitudes, ascertained, conjectured, or possible, may be regarded—not as a vehicle, not as an inhabited form, or a comprehending sphere, of the Sovereign Spirit, but as a type, which signifies, though by a faint, inadequate correspondence after all, that as great as the universe is in the material attributes of extension and splendor, so great is the Divine Being in the infinitely transcendent nature of spiritual existence.

9. *Attributes of God revealed through the diversity and immensity of his works.*—We are placed amidst the amazing scenes of his works extending on all sides, from the point where we stand to far beyond anything we can distinctly conceive of *infinity*; in a diversity which not eternal duration will suffice for

any creature to take account of all; having within one day, one hour, one instant, operations, changes, appearances, to which the greatest angel's calculating faculty would be nothing; combining design—order—beauty—sublimity—utility. Such is the scene to be contemplated. But now while our attention wanders over it, or fixes on parts of it, do we regard it but as if it were something existing by itself? Can we glance over the earth, and into the wilderness of worlds in infinite space without being impressed with the solemn thought, that all this is but the sign and proof of something infinitely more glorious than itself? Are we not reminded—this is a production of his Almighty power;—that is an adjustment of his all-comprehending intelligence and foresight;—there is a glimmer, a ray of his beauty, his glory;—there an emanation of his benignity;—and there some fiery trace of his justice;—but for him all this never would have been;—and if for a moment his pervading energy were, by his will, restrained or suspended,—what would it all be then? That there should be men, who can survey the creation with a scientific enlargement of intelligence, and then say “there is no God,” is one of the most hideous phenomena in the world.

10. *Particularity of Divine knowledge.*—Think what a compass of vision, and how much more he sees than we do, in any one act or incident on which our utmost attention may be fixed. To us there is an unknown part in every action. Our attention leaves one acting mortal to fix on another. He continues to observe every one and all. Think again while we are judging, *He is judging!* There is at this instant a perfected estimate in an unseen mind of this that I am thinking how to estimate!—If that judgment could lighten on me and on its subject!

11. *God overrules all events.*—Sometimes in particular parts and instances we can see how human

actions in their confused mass or series, have been compelled into a process which results in what human wisdom never could have predicted, and what an immensity of them is God compelling at this very hour! In our conscious feebleness of intelligence, it is striking to look at actions, and wonder what purpose of his he can make those conduce to—and those. Look at the vast world of them; see what kind they are; and then think what *He* must be that can control them all to his supreme purpose! Yet there are some parts of the view in which the proceeding of Divine Providence is conspicuous and intelligible. We see *how* sin is made its own plague, even in this life; and how by what law — “holiness to the Lord” contains the living principle of happiness. And also, *how* some of the transactions and events in the world are tending to certain grand results which God has avowed to be in his purpose.

12. *A belief in the Divine existence and sovereignty the only reliable foundation of virtue.*—That solemn reverence for the Deity, and expectation of a future judgment, without which it is a pure matter of fact that there is no such thing on earth as an invincible and universal virtue.

13. *Deities of paganism and false religion, not above crimination themselves, can not, in their worship and moral systems, condemn sin in their votaries.*—If there were ten thousand deities, there should not be one that should be authorized by perfect rectitude in itself to punish *him*; not one by which it should be possible for him to be rebuked without having a right to recriminate.

14. *The atheist.*—To the atheist there is *nothing* in place of that which is the supremacy of all existence and glory. The Divine Spirit, and all spirits, being abolished, he is left amid masses and systems of matter, without a first cause, ruled by chance, or by a blind mechanical impulse of what he calls fate;

and as a little composition of atoms, he is himself to take his chance, for a few moments of conscious being, and then to be no more for ever. And yet in this infinite prostration of all things, he feels an elation of intellectual pride.

15. *Peculiar illumination of the atheist questioned.*—But give your own description of what you have met with in a world which has been deemed to present in every part the indications of a Deity. Tell of the mysterious voices which have spoken to you from the depths of the creation, falsifying the expressions marked on its face. Tell of the new ideas, which, like meteors passing over the solitary wanderer, gave him the first glimpse of truth while benighted in the common belief of the Divine existence. Describe the whole train of causes that have operated to create and consolidate that state of mind which you carry forward to the great experiment of futurity, under a different kind of hazard from all other classes of men.

16. *Ignorant and arrogant pretensions of the atheist.*—The wonder then turns on the great process, by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for THIS attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he can not know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God. If he can not with cer-

tainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know everything that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things—that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself—he can not know that the Being whose existence he rejects, does not exist. But he must *know* that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection and acts accordingly. Surely the creature that thus lifts his voice, and defies all invisible power within the possibilities of infinity, challenging whatever unknown being may hear him, and may appropriate that title of Almighty which is pronounced in scorn, to evince his existence, if he will, by his vengeance, was not as yesterday a little child that would tremble and cry at the approach of a diminutive reptile.

17. *Certain philosophers impatient of the ideas of a Divine Providence and his revelation to the world.*—No builders of houses or cities were ever more attentive to guard against the access of inundation or fire. If *He* should but touch their prospective theories of improvement, they would renounce them, as defiled and fit only for vulgar fanaticism. Their system of providence would be profaned by the intrusion of the Almighty. Man is to effect an apotheosis for himself, by the hopeful process of exhausting his corruptions. And should it take all but an endless series of ages, vices, and woes, to reach this glorious attainment, patience may sustain itself the while by the thought that, when it is realized, it will be burdened with no duty of religious gratitude. No time is too long to wait, no cost too deep to incur, for the triumph of proving that we have no need of that one attribute of a Divinity—which creates the grand interest in acknowledging

such a Being—the benevolence that would make us happy. But even if this triumph should be found unattainable, the independence of spirit which has labored for it must not at last sink into piety. This afflicted world, “this poor terrestrial citadel of man,” is to lock its gates, and keep its miseries, rather than admit the degradation of receiving help from God.

CHAPTER II.

THOUGHTS ON THE EVIDENCES OF RELIGION—THE
SOURCES, PREJUDICES, AND TENDENCIES, OF SKEP-
TICISM, ETC.

1. *Unsettled faith as unreasonable as presumptuous.*
—If they [undecided individuals] really do not care enough about this transcendent subject, to desire, above all things on earth, a just and final determination of their judgments upon it, we can only deplore that anything so precious as a mind should have been committed to such cruelly thoughtless possessors. We can only repeat some useless expressions of amazement to see a rational being holding itself in such contempt; and predict a period when itself will be still much more amazed at the remembrance how many thousand insignificant questions found their turn to be considered and decided, while the one involving infinite consequences was reserved to be determined by the event—too late, therefore, to have an auspicious influence on that event, which was the grand object, for the sake of which it ought to have been determined before all other questions. It is impossible to hear, with the slightest degree of respect of patience, the expressions of doubt or anxiety about the truth of Christianity, from any one who can delay a week to obtain this celebrated View of its Evidences, or fail to read it through again and again. It is of no use to say what would be our opinion of the moral and intellectual state of his mind, if, after this, he remained still undecided. We regard Dr. Paley's

writings on the "Evidences of Christianity" as of so signally decisive a character, that we would be content to let them stand as the essence and the close of the great argument on the part of its believers; and should feel no despondency or chagrin if we could be prophetically certified that such an efficient Christian reasoner would never henceforward arise. We should consider the grand fortress of proof, as now raised and finished, the intellectual capitol of that empire which is destined to leave the widest boundaries attained by the Roman very far behind.

2. *Christianity everything or nothing.*—The book which avows itself, by a thousand solemn and explicit declarations, to be a communication from Heaven, is either what it thus declares itself to be, or a most monstrous imposture. If these philosophers hold it to be an imposture, and therefore an execrable deception put on the sense of mankind, how contemptible it is to see them practising their civil cringe, and uttering phrases of deference! If they admit it to be what it avows itself, how detestable is their conduct in advancing positions and theories, with a cool disregard of the highest authority, confronting and contradicting them all the while! And if the question is deemed to be yet in suspense, how ridiculous it is to be thus building up speculations and systems, pending a cause which may require their demolition the instant it is decided! Who would not despise or pity a man eagerly raising a fine house on a piece of ground at the very time in doubtful litigation? Who would not have laughed at a man who should have published a book of geography, with minute descriptions and costly maps, of distant regions and islands, at the very time that Magellan or Cook was absent on purpose to determine their position, or even verify their existence?

3. *Christianity the supreme pursuit.*—Assembling into one view all things in the world that are impor-

tant, and should be dear to mankind, I distinguish the Christian cause as the celestial *soul* of the assemblage, evincing the same pre-eminence, and challenging the same emphatic passion, which in any other case *mind* does beyond the inferior elements; and I have no wish of equal energy with that which aspires to the most intimate possible connexion with Him who is the life of this cause, and the life of the world.

4. *Branches of the Christian argument.*—A train of miracles, attested in the most authoritative manner that is within the competence of history; the evidence afforded by prophecies fulfilled, that the author of Revelation is the being who sees into futurity; the manifestation, in revealed religion, of a superhuman knowledge of the nature and condition of man; the adaptation of the remedial system to that condition; the incomparable excellence of the Christian morality; the analogy between the works of God and what claims to be the Word of God; and the interpositions with respect to the cause and the adherents of religion in the course of the Divine government on the earth: this grand coincidence of verifications has not left the faith of the disciple of Christianity at the mercy of optics and geometry. He may calmly tell science to mind its own affairs, if it should presume, with pretensions to authority, to interfere with his religion.

5. *Miracles not incredible.*—We repel that philosophizing spirit, as it would be called, which insists on resolving all the extraordinary phenomena, recorded in the Old Testament, into the effect of *merely* natural causes; just as if the *order of nature* had been constituted by some other and greater Being, and *intrusted* to the Almighty to be administered, under an obligation never to suspend, for a moment, the fixed laws! Just as if it could not consist with infinite Wisdom to order a system so that in particular cases a greater advantage should arise from a mo-

mentary deviation than from an invariable procedure!

6. *Argument from miracles.*—Surely it is fair to believe that those who received from Heaven superhuman power, received likewise superhuman wisdom. Having rung the *great bell of the universe*, the sermon to follow must be extraordinary.

7. *Analogy of religion to the course of Nature.*—It is an evident and remarkable fact, that there is a certain principle of correspondence to religion throughout the economy of the world. Things bearing an apparent analogy to its truths, sometimes more prominently, sometimes more abstrusely, present themselves on all sides to a thoughtful mind. He that made all things for himself appears to have willed that they should be a great system of emblems, reflecting or shadowing that system of principles which is the true theory concerning him, and our relations to him. So that religion, standing up in grand parallel to an infinity of things, receives their testimony and homage, and speaks with a voice which is echoed by the creation.

8. *Proud assumption of infidelity.*—Infidels assume, in subjects which from their magnitude necessarily stretch away into mystery, to pronounce whatever can or can not be. They seem to say, "We stand on an eminence sufficient to command a vision of all things: *therefore* whatever we can not see, does not exist."

9. *Partial knowledge of Divine economy should repress reasoning pride.*—We are, as to the grand system and series of God's government, like a man, who, confined in a dark room, should observe, through a chink of the wall, some large animal passing by: he sees but an extremely narrow strip of the object at once as it moves by, and is utterly unable to form an idea of the size, proportions, or shape of it.

10. *Process of the physical creation.*—Darkness brooding, dim dreary light, herbs, sun, &c. *Analogy.*

Consider the whole course of time as the world's *moral creation*. At what period and stage in the analogy has it *now* arrived?—not more than *the first day*.

11. *Christianity beset with no more difficulties than other subjects*.—The whole hemisphere of contemplation appears inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, and Alps upon Alps! It is in vain to declaim against skepticism. I feel with an emphasis of conviction, and wonder, and regret, that almost all things are enveloped in shade; that many things are covered with thickest darkness; that the number of things to which certainty belongs is small. . . . I hope to enjoy “the sunshine of the other world.” One of the very few things that appear to me not doubtful, is the truth of Christianity in general.

12. *Objections to Christianity from the discoveries of the telescope answered by those of the microscope*.—Those who justify their infidelity by the discoveries of the telescope, seem to have chosen to forget that there is another instrument which has made hardly less wonderful discoveries in an opposite direction—discoveries authorizing an inference completely destructive of that made from the astronomical magnitudes. And it is very gratifying to see the lofty assumptions drawn, in a spirit as unphilosophical as irreligious, from remote systems and the immensity of the universe, and advanced against Christianity with an air of irresistible authority—to see them encountered and annihilated by evidences sent forth from tribes and races of beings, of which innumerable millions might pass under the intensest look of the human eye imperceptible as empty space. It is immediately obvious that an incomparably more glorious idea is entertained of the Divinity, by conceiving of him as possessing a wisdom and a power competent, without an effort, to maintain an infinitely-

perfect inspection and regulation, distinctly, of all subsistences, even the minutest, comprehended in the universe, than by conceiving of him as only maintaining some kind of general superintendence of the system—only general, because a perfect attention to all existences individually would be too much, it is deemed, for the capacity of even the Supreme Mind. And for the very reason that this would be the most glorious idea of him, it must be the true one. To say that we can, in the abstract, conceive of a magnitude of intelligence and power which would constitute the Deity, *if he possessed it*, a more glorious and adorable Being than he actually is, could be nothing less than flagrant impiety.

13. *Hopeless attempt of the deist to solve the great problem of the human condition.*—The inquirer must be curious to see in what manner he disposes of the stupendous depravity, which through all ages has covered the earth with crimes and miseries; and how he has illustrated the grand and happy effects resulting from the general and permanent predominance of the selfish over the benevolent affections, from the imbecility of reason and conscience as opposed to appetite, from the infinitely greater facility of forming and retaining bad habits than good ones, from the incalculable number of false opinions embraced instead of the true, and from the deprivation which is always found to steal very soon into the best institutions. He must surely be no less solicitous to see the dignity and certainty of the moral sense verified in the face of the well-known fact that there is no crime which has not, in the absence of revelation, been committed, in one part of the world or another, without the smallest consciousness of guilt.

14. *Prejudices of unbelievers.*—They might perhaps be severely mortified to find what vulgar motives, while they were despising vulgar men, have ruled their intellectual career. Pride, which idolizes self,

which revolts at everything that comes in the form of *dictates*, and exults to find that there is a possibility of controverting whether any dictates come from a greater than mortal source ; repugnance as well to the severe and sublime morality of the laws reputed of divine appointment, as to the feeling of accountability to an all-powerful Authority, that will not leave moral laws to be enforced solely by their own sanctions ; contempt of inferior men ; the attraction of a few brilliant examples ; the fashion of a class ; the ambition of showing what ability can do, and what boldness can dare : if such things as these, after all, have excited and directed the efforts of a philosophic spirit, the unbelieving philosopher must be content to acknowledge plenty of companions and rivals among little men, who are quite as capable of being actuated by these elevated principles as himself.

15. *Seeking for secondary causes to escape the recognition of the sovereign agency of Divine Providence.*—As if a man were prying about for this and the other cause of damage, to account for the aspect of a region which has recently been devastated by inundations or earthquakes.

16. *Many betrayed into infidelity by a blinded admiration of the genius of brilliant but unprincipled authors.*—There is scarcely any such thing in the world as simple conviction. It would be amusing to observe how reason had, in one instance, been overruled into acquiescence by the admiration of a celebrated name, or in another, into opposition by the envy of it ; how most opportunely reason discovered the truth just at the time that interest could be essentially served by avowing it ; how easily the impartial examiner could be induced to adopt some part of another man's opinions, after that other had zealously approved some favorite, especially if unpopular, part of his ; as the Pharisees almost became partial even to Christ, at the moment that he defended one of their doctrines.

against the Sadducees. It would be curious to see how a respectful estimate of a man's character and talents might be changed, in consequence of some personal inattention experienced from him, into depreciating invective against him or his intellectual performances, and yet the railer, though actuated solely by petty revenge, account himself all the while the model of equity and sound judgment. Like the mariners in a story which I remember to have read, who followed the direction of their compass, infallibly right, as they could have no doubt, till they arrived at an enemy's port, where they were seized and made slaves. It happened that the wicked captain, in order to betray the ship, had concealed a large loadstone at a little distance on one side of the needle.

17. *Writings of infidelity*.—You would examine those pages with the expectation probably of something more powerful than subtlety attenuated into inanity, and, in that invisible and impalpable state, mistaken by the writer, and willingly admitted by the perverted reader, for profundity of reasoning; than attempts to destroy the certainty, or preclude the application, of some of those great familiar principles which must be taken as the basis of human reasoning, or it can have no basis; than suppositions which attribute the order of the universe to such causes as it would be felt ridiculous to pronounce adequate to produce the most trifling piece of mechanism; than mystical jargon which, under the name of *Nature*, alternately exalts almost into the properties of a god, and reduces far below those of a man, some imaginary and undefinable agent or agency, which performs the most amazing works without power, and displays the most amazing wisdom without intelligence; than a zealous preference of that part of every great dilemma which merely confounds and sinks the mind to that which elevates while it over-

whelms it; than a constant endeavor to degrade as far as possible everything that is sublime in our speculations and feelings, or than monstrous parallels between religion and mythology.

18. *False systems often apologized for, for the purpose of disparaging all religion.*—There had not been in this country so free a display of every infidel propensity as to render it a matter of familiar observation, that men who hate the intrusion of a Divine jurisdiction are much inclined to regard with favor a mode of pretended religion, which they can make light of as devoid of all real authority. They are so inclined because, through its generic quality (of religion), it somewhat assists them to make light also of a more formidable thing of that quality and name. It comes, probably, with a great show of claims—antiquity, pretended miracles, and an immense number of believers: it may nevertheless be disbelieved with most certain impunity. Under the encouragement of this disbelief with impunity, the mind ventures to look toward other religions, and at last toward the Christian. *That* also has its antiquity, its recorded miracles, and its multitude of believers. Though there may not, perhaps, be impious assurance enough to assume formally the equality of the pretensions in the two cases, there is a successful eagerness to escape from the evidence that the apparent similarity is superficial, and the real difference infinite; and the irreligious spirit springs rapidly and gladly, in its disbelief, from the one, as a stepping-place to the other. But that which affords such an important convenience for surmounting the awe of the true religion, will naturally be a great favorite, even at the very moment it is seen to be contemptible, and indeed in a sense in consequence of its being so, complacency mingles with the very contempt for that from which contempt may rebound on Christianity.

19. *Origin of the elevated ideas in the pagan the-*

ology.—Adverting to what may be called the theology of the system [paganism], no one denies that a number of very abstracted and elevated ideas relating to a Deity are found in the ancient books, whether these ideas had descended traditionally from the primary communication of divine truth to our race, or had diverged so far toward the east from the revelation imparted through Moses to the Jews. . . A faded trace of primeval truth remains in their theology, in a certain inane notion of a Supreme Spirit, distinguished from the infinity of personifications on which the religious sentiment is wasted, and from those few transcendent demon figures which proudly stand out from the insignificance of the swarm. But it is unnecessary to say that this notion, a thin remote abstraction, as a mere *nebula* in the Hindoo heaven, is quite inefficient for shedding one salutary ray on the spirits infatuated with all that is trivial and gross in superstition.

20. *Paganism distinguished from Divine revelation*.—The system, if so it is to be called, appears, to a cursory inquirer at least, an utter chaos, without top, or bottom, or centre, or any dimension or proportion, belonging to either matter or mind, and consisting of materials which certainly deserve no better order. It gives one the idea of immensity filled with what is not of the value of an atom. It is the most remarkable exemplification of the possibility of making the grandest ideas contemptible by conjunction; for that of infinity is here combined with the very abstract of worthlessness. While it commands the faith of its subjects, completes its power over them by its accordance to their pride, malevolence, sensuality, and deceitfulness; to that natural concomitant of pride, the baseness which is ready to prostrate itself in homage to anything that shall put itself in place of God; and to that interest which criminals feel to transfer their own accountableness upon the powers

above them. But then think what a condition for human creatures! they believe in a religion which invigorates, by coincidence and sanction, those principles in their nature which the true religion is intended to destroy; and in return, those principles thus strengthened contribute to confirm their faith in the religion. The mischief inflicted becomes the most effectual persuasion to confidence in the inflicter.

21. *Multiplicity of pagan wickedness.*—And so indefatigable was its exercise, that almost all conceivable forms of immorality were brought to imagination, most of them into experiment, and the greater number into prevailing practice, in those nations: inasmuch that the sated monarch would have imposed as difficult a task on ingenuity in calling for the invention of a new vice as of a new pleasure.

22. *Pride revolted into infidelity by the impartial philanthropy of Christianity.*—Let that pride speak out; it would be curious to hear it say that your mental refinement perhaps *might* have permitted you to take your ground on that eminence of the Christian faith where Milton and Pascal stood, *if* so many humbler beings did not disgrace it by occupying the declivity and the vale.

23. *Perverse blindness of those who see no moral beauty and grandeur in Divine revelation.*—Like an ignorant clown who, happening to look at the heavens, perceives nothing more awful in that wilderness of suns than in the row of lamps along the streets! If you do read that book in the better state of feeling, I have no comprehension of the mechanism of your mind, if the first perception would not be that of a simple, venerable dignity, and if the second would not be that of a certain abstract, undefinable magnificence; a perception of something which, behind this simplicity, expands into a greatness beyond the compass of your mind; an impression like that with which

a thoughtful man would have looked on the countenance of Newton, after he had published his discoveries, feeling a kind of mystical absorption in the attempt to comprehend the magnitude of the soul residing within that form.

24. *The blighting influence of infidelity.*—Religion, believed and felt, is the amplitude of our moral nature. And how wretched an object therefore is a mind, especially of thought, sensibility, and genius, condemned to that poverty and insulation which infidelity inflicts, by annihilating around it the medium of a sensible interest in the existence, the emotions, the activities, of a higher order of beings!

25. *The gospel provides for those overlooked by philosophy and false religion.*—It is the beneficent distinction of the gospel, that notwithstanding it is of a magnitude to interest and to surpass angelic investigation (and therefore assuredly to pour contempt on the pride of human intelligence that rejects it for its meanness), it is yet most expressly sent to the class which philosophers have always despised. And a good man feels it a cause of grateful joy, that a communication has come from Heaven, adapted to effect the happiness of multitudes, in spite of natural debility or neglected education.

26. *Christianity dissevered from its corruptions.*—Such a man as I have supposed, understands what its tendency and dictates really are, so far at least that, in contemplating the bigotry, persecution, hypocrisy, and worldly ambition, which have stained, and continue to stain, the Christian history, his mind instantly dissevers, by a decisive glance of thought, all these evils, and the pretended Christians who are accountable for them, from the religion which is as distinct from them as the Spirit that pervades all things is pure from matter and from sin. In his view, these odious things and these wicked men that have arrogated and defiled the Christian name, sink

out of sight through a chasm, like Koran, Dathan, and Abiram, and leave the camp and the cause holy, though they leave the numbers small.

27. *Glory of religion obscured by imperfect manifestation.*—Contracted and obscured in its abode, the inhabitant will appear, as the sun through a misty sky, with but little of its magnificence, to a man who can be content to receive his impression of the intellectual character of the religion from the mode of its manifestation from the minds of its disciples; and, in doing so, can indolently and perversely allow himself to regard the weakest mode of its displaying itself, as its truest image. In taking such a dwelling, the religion seems to imitate what was prophesied of its author, that, when he should be seen, there would be no beauty that he should be desired. This humiliation is inevitable; for unless miracles are wrought, to impart to the less intellectual disciples an enlarged power of thinking, the evangelic truth must accommodate itself to the dimensions and unrefined habits of their minds.

28. *Christianity prejudiced by the ignorant representatives of its friends.*—As the gospel comprises an ample assemblage of intellectual views, and as the greater number of Christians are inevitably disqualified to do justice to them, even in any degree, by the same causes which disqualify them to do justice to other intellectual subjects, it is not improbable, that the greater number of expressions which he has heard in his whole life, have been utterly below the subject. Obviously this is a very serious circumstance; for if he had heard as much spoken on any other intellectual subject, as, for instance, poetry, or astronomy, for which perhaps he has a passion, and if a similar proportion of what he had heard had been as much below the subject, he would probably have acquired but little partiality for either of those studies. And it is a very melancholy disposition against the human

heart, that the gospel needs fewer unfavorable associations to become repulsive in it, than any other important subject.

29. *Christianity distinguished from its corruptions.*—In the view of an intelligent and honest mind the religion of Christ stands as clear of all connexion with the corruption of men, and churches, and ages, as when it was first revealed. It retains its purity like Moses in Egypt, or Daniel in Babylon, or the Savior of the world himself, while he mingled with scribes and Pharisees, or republicans and sinners.

30. *The evangelical system appears without form or comeliness to worldly men.*—In admitting this portion of the system as a part of the truth, his feelings amount to the wish that a different theory *had been true*. . . . The dignity of religion, as a general and refined speculation, he may have long acknowledged; but it appears to him as if it lost part of that dignity, in taking the specific form of the evangelical system; just as if an ethereal being were reduced to combine his radiance and subtilty with an earthly nature. . . . The gospel appears to him like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, refulgent indeed with a head of gold; the sublime truths which are independent of every peculiar dispensation are luminously exhibited; but the doctrines which are added as descriptive of the peculiar circumstances of the Christian economy, appear less splendid, and as if descending toward the qualities of iron and clay.

31. *Inadequate and narrow views of some Christians.*—He may sometimes have heard the discourse of sincere Christians, whose religion involved no intellectual exercise, and, strictly speaking, no *subject* of intellect. Separately from their feelings, it had no definition, no topics, no distinct succession of views. And if he or some other person attempted to talk on some part of the religion *itself*, as a thing definable and important, independently of the feelings of any

individual, and as consisting in a vast congeries of ideas, relating to the divine government of the world, to the general nature of the economy disclosed by the Messiah, to the distinct doctrines in the theory of that economy, to moral principles, and to the greatness of the future prospects of man, — they seemed to have no concern in *that* religion, and impatiently interrupted the subject with the observation, — that is not experience.

32. *The gospel adapted to all orders of mind.*— By want of acuteness do you fail to distinguish between the mode (a mere extrinsic and casual mode), and the substance? In the world of nature you see the same simple elements wrought into the plainest and most beautiful, into the most diminutive and the most majestic forms. So the same simple principles of Christian truth may constitute the basis of a very inferior, or a very noble, order of ideas. The principles themselves have an invariable quality; but they were not imparted to man to be fixed in the mind as so many bare scientific propositions, each confined to one single mode of conception, without any collateral ideas, and to be always expressed in one unalterable form of words. They are placed there in order to spread out, if I might so express it, into a great multitude and diversity of ideas and feelings. These ideas and feelings, forming round the pure, simple principles, will correspond, and will make those principles seem to correspond, to the meaner or more dignified intellectual rank of mind. Why will you not perceive that the subject which takes so humble a style in its less intellectual believers, unfolds greater proportions through a gradation of larger and still larger faculties, and with facility occupies the whole capacity of the amplest, in the same manner as the ocean fills a gulf as easily as a creek? Through this series it retains an identity of its essential principles, and appears progressively

a nobler thing only by gaining a position for more nobly displaying itself. Why will you not follow it through this gradation, till it reach the point where it is presented in a greatness of character, to correspond with the improved state of your mind? Never fear lest the gospel should prove not sublime enough for the elevation of your thoughts. If you could attain an intellectual eminence from which you would look with pity on the rank which you at present hold, you would still find the dignity of this subject occupying your level, and rising above it. Do you doubt this? What then do you think of such spirits, for instance, as those of Milton and Pascal? And by how many degrees of the intellectual scale shall yours surpass them, to authorize your feeling that to be little which they felt to be great? They were often conscious of the magnificence of Christian truth filling, distending, and exceeding, their faculties, and sometimes wished for greater powers to do it justice. In their noblest contemplations, they did not feel their minds elevating the subject, but the subject elevating their minds.

33. *Christianity the same amid the various and changing evils of the world.*—It is most consolatory to reflect, that religion, like an angel walking among the ranks of guilty men, still untainted and pure, retains, amid all these black and outrageous evils, the same benign and celestial spirit, and gives the same independent and perpetual pleasures. The happiness of the good seeks not the smile of guilty power, nor dreads its frown. Let a Christian philosophy, therefore, elevate all our speculations, calm our indignant feelings, and dignify all our conduct. . . .

34. *Two ways to atheism.*—There is a broad easy way to atheism through thoughtless ignorance, as well as a narrow and difficult one through subtle speculation.

35. *Dreary eminence of infidelity.*—I am describing

the progress of one of the humble order of aliens from all religion, and not that by which the great philosophic leaders have ascended the dreary eminence, where they look with so much complacency up to a vacant heaven, and down to the gulf of annihilation.

36. *Consummation of allowed skepticism.*—The progress in guilt, which generally follows a rejection of revelation makes it still more and more desirable that no object should remain to be feared. It was not strange therefore if this man read with avidity or even strange if he read with something which his wishes completed into conviction, a few of the writers, who have attempted the last achievement of presumptuous man. After inspecting these pages awhile, he raised his eyes, and the great Spirit was gone. Mighty transformation of all things! The luminaries of heaven no longer shone with his splendor; the adorned earth no longer looked fair with his beauty; the darkness of night had ceased to be rendered solemn by his majesty; life and thought were not an effect of his all-pervading energy; it was not his providence that supported an infinite charge of dependent beings; his empire of justice no longer spread over the universe; nor had even that universe sprung from his all-creating power.

37. *The boasted triumph of infidelity in the death of Hume.*—To be a conscious agent, exerting a rich combination of wonderful faculties to feel, an infinite variety of pleasurable sensations and emotions, to contemplate all nature, to extend an intellectual presence to indefinite ages of the past and future, to possess a perennial spring of ideas, to run infinite lengths of inquiry, with the delight of exercise and fleetness, even when not with the satisfaction of full attainment, and to be a lord over inanimate matter, compelling it to an action and a use altogether foreign to its nature, to be all this, is a state so stupendously different from that of being simply a piece of clay,

that to be quite easy, and complacent in the immediate prospect of passing from the one to the other is a total inversion of all reasonable estimates of things ; it is a renunciation, we do not say of sound philosophy, but of common sense. The certainty that the loss will not be felt after it has taken place, will but little sooth a man of unperverted mind in considering what it is that he is going to lose.

The jocularly of the philosopher was contrary to good *taste*. Supposing that the expected loss were *not*, according to a grand law of nature, a cause for melancholy and desperation, but that the contentment were rational ; yet the approaching transformation was at all events to be regarded as a very grave and very strange event, and therefore jocularly was totally incongruous with the anticipation of such an event : a grave and solemn feeling was the only one that could be in unison with the contemplation of such a change. There was, in this instance, the same incongruity which we should impute to a writer who should mingle buffoonery in a solemn crisis of the drama, or with the most momentous event of a history. To be in harmony with his situation, in his own view of that situation, the expressions of the dying philosopher were required to be dignified ; and if they were in any degree vivacious, the vivacity ought to have been rendered graceful by being accompanied with the noblest effort of the intellect of which the efforts were going to cease for ever. The low vivacity of which we have been reading, seems but like the quickening corruption of a mind whose faculty of perception is putrefying and dissolving even before the body. It is true that good men, of a high order, have been known to utter pleasantries in their last hours. But these have been pleasantries of a fine ethereal quality, the scintillations of animated hope, the high pulsations of mental health, the involuntary movements of a spirit feeling itself free

even in the grasp of death, the natural springs and boundings of faculties on the point of obtaining a still much greater and a boundless liberty. These had no resemblance to the low and labored jokes of our philosopher ; jokes so labored as to give strong cause for suspicion, after all, that they were of the same nature, and for the same purpose, as the expedient of a boy on passing through some gloomy place in the night, who whistles to lessen his fear, or to persuade his companion that he does not feel it.

Such a manner of meeting death was inconsistent with the skepticism, to which Hume was always found to avow his adherence. For that skepticism necessarily acknowledged a possibility and a chance that the religion which he had scorned, might, notwithstanding, be found true, and might, in the moment after his death, glare upon him with all its terrors. But how dreadful to a reflecting mind would have been the smallest chance of meeting such a vision ! Yet the philosopher could be cracking his heavy jokes, and Dr. Smith could be much diverted at the sport.

To a man who solemnly believes the truth of revelation, and therefore the threatenings of divine vengeance against the despisers of it, this scene will present as mournful a spectacle as perhaps the sun ever shone upon.

CHAPTER III.

THOUGHTS ON THE LAW OF GOD—ITS HOLINESS, COMPREHENSIVENESS, APPLICATIONS, AND EVASIONS.

1. *God a lawgiver.*—The first view of the relation between God and all other beings, is that of his being their Creator. The next view of the relation is that which manifests him as a Lawgiver. By the very nature of the case, this must be an essential part of the relation. No right so absolute, to give laws, can be conceived, as that of the Creator; for he is necessarily the Supreme Being. He has a perfect and exclusive property in what he has created. All created being is entirely dependent on him for being and well-being. He alone can have a perfect understanding of what is the right state, and the right procedure, of created beings; they can not understand themselves, and therefore could not, if they would, devise competent laws. He alone has the power to enforce a system of laws over the whole creation. The mention of the "whole creation" may suggest one application of the terms—the amazing extent of the scene of his legislation!

2. *Supposition of a divine law necessary.*—We can not conceive of the sovereign Creator and Governor of the world as not appointing a law to his intelligent creatures; that he should be what the epicureans accounted of their gods, perfectly careless about the world and what may be done in it. As the Maker of creatures who are to be wholly and for ever dependent upon him, he must necessarily have them

under his sovereign authority. He must, also, necessarily have a *will* with respect to the state of the dispositions, and the order of actions, of his intelligent creatures, and he must perfectly know what is right for them. He would, therefore, as at once the supreme authority and the infallible intelligence, prescribe to his creatures a *law* of injunction and prohibition—a grand rule of discrimination and obligation. He would do so, except on one supposition, namely, that he had willed to constitute his rational creatures such that they must necessarily always be disposed and always act *right*, by the infallible propensity of their nature—by their own unalterable and eternal choice; so that there could be no possibility of their going wrong from either inclination or mistake. But the Almighty did *not* so constitute any natures that we know anything of.

3. *Comprehensiveness of the divine law.*—Perhaps, according to that *divine standard*, which is the ultimate abstraction of all relations, analogies, measures, and proportions, and in which the laws and principles of the natural world, and those of the moral, are resolved in the same (are in their original undivided essence), the grandeur of a virtue may be as great or much greater than that of a volcano, the mischief of a vice as great as that of an earthquake.

4. *The law necessarily holy.*—As to the quality and extent of that law, proceeding from a perfectly holy Being, it could not do less than prescribe a perfect holiness in all things. Think of the absurdity there is in the idea that its requirements should be less than perfect holiness. For that less—what should it be? What would or could the *remainder* be *after* holiness up to a certain point and stopping there? It must be *not* holiness just so far. Not holiness? and what must it be, then? What *could* it be, but something *unholy*, wrong, sinful? Thus a law not requiring *perfect* rectitude, would *so far* give an al

lowance, a *sanction*, to what is evil—sin. And from *Him* who is perfectly and infinitely holy ! An utter absurdity to conceive ! A law from such an author will not and can not reduce and accommodate itself to an imperfect, fallen, and incapable state of those on whom it is imposed . . . exacting no more than just what an imperfect, fallen creature can perform—[and] allowing and sanctioning all the vast amount of unholiness beyond : [else] a strong indisposition to the right and disposition to the wrong would become a clear acquittance, the greatest depravity confer the amplest privilege of exemption, and an intense and perfect aversion to all holiness, as constituting the greatest inability to conform to the divine law, would constitute very nearly a perfect innocence.

5. *Law unalterable.*—How little is this recognised among the multitude amenable to it ! It is as if the tables written on Sinai had been subjected to be passed through the camp for the people to revise, interpolate, erase, or wholly substitute, at their pleasure. Never Jesuit's commentary on the Bible falsified it more than the world's system of principles perverts or supplants that of the Almighty. This operation began even in Eden, through "the wisdom that is from beneath," and has continued ever since.

6. *Comprehensive application of the law.*—Doubtless not the wide compass of the scene and subjects is meant, but the quality of the law as imperative on man, its authority and requirements applied to so many points, the comprehensiveness, the universality of its jurisdiction. It reaches and comprehends the whole extent of all things in which there is the distinction of right and wrong, good and evil. Now, then, think of the almost infinite multiplicity of things in which this distinction has a place ; the grand total of what is passing in men's minds, converse, and action—is passing at this hour—has been in the course

of the day—during the whole course of life of each and all. Think how much, how little, of all this can be justly considered as withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Divine authority and law. A wide rain, or the beams of the sun, hardly fall on a greater multitude and diversity of things.

7. *Complaisancy of holy beings in the law.*—Now an intelligent creature, in a right state—that is, a holy state, in harmony with God—would be deeply pleased that all things should be thus marked with a signification of his will. For how happy, to be in all things at the direction of the Supreme Wisdom! in all things made clearly aware what is conformity to the Divine Excellence; insomuch that, if the case could be supposed of anything of material interest being left without this mark of the Divine Will, under an eclipse of the light from God, that would to such a spirit appear as something distressing, and fearful, and portentous—would be felt as threatening some undefinable hazard. To a being possessed and filled with the reverential love of God, it would be a most acceptable and welcome thing, that thus it should be made manifest in all things what is his pleasure; that the whole field of existence and action should bear all over it the decided and precise delineations, as on a map, of the ways which his creatures are to take. Should it not be so? Must it not be so to an uncorrupted and holy creature of God? But is it so to the general spirit of mankind? is it so naturally to any of them?

8. *Distinctions of the law effaced.*—It is deplorable to consider how large a proportion of all the vices and crimes of which mankind were ever guilty, have actually constituted, in some or other of their tribes and ages, a part of the approved moral and religious system. It is questionable whether we could select from the worst forms of turpitude any one which has not been at least admitted among the authorized cus-

toms, if not even appointed among the institutes of the religion, of some portion of the human race.

9. *Dominion of the law sought to be restricted.*—It is not a welcome thing that the law of God is so “exceeding broad.” Accordingly, its breadth is, in every imaginable way, endeavored to be narrowed. It is true that even the very apprehension of it is very limited and faint. If the dullness and contractedness of apprehension could be set aside for an interval, and a palpable, luminous manifestation made of the vast compass and the whole order of distinctions of this Divine law, it would strike as ten times—a hundred times—beyond all that had been suspected. Yet still, in multitudes of minds, there is apprehension enough of such a widely-extended law to cause disquietude, to excite reaction and a recourse to anything that will seem to narrow that law If the Divine jurisdiction would yield to contract its comprehension, and retire from all the ground over which a practical infidelity heedlessly disregards or deliberately rejects it, how large a province it would leave free.

10. *The great sanction of morals arises from the recognition of the Divine law, and not from civil government.*—With all its gravity, and phrases of wisdom, and show of homage to virtue, it was, and was plainly descried to be, that very same *noli me tangere*, in a disguised form; a less provoking and hostile manner only of keeping up the state of preparation for defensive war. Every one knew right well that the pure approbation and love of goodness were not the source of law; but that it was an arrangement originating and deriving all its force from self-interest—a contrivance by which each man was glad to make the collective strength of society his guaranty against his neighbor’s interest and wish to do him wrong A preceptive system thus estimated could not, even had the principles to which it gave expres-

sion in the mandates of law, been no other than those of the soundest morality, have impressed them with the weight of sanctity on the conscience. And all this but tends to show the necessity that the rules and sanctions of morality to come with simplicity and power on the human mind, should primarily emanate, and be acknowledged as emanating, from a Being exalted above all implication and competition of interest with man.

11. *Good principles efficacious only as abetted by the sanctions of a Divine law.*—Supposing them intrinsically right, what will that—merely that—avail, amid the commotion of the passions, the beguilements of immediate interest, the endless besetment of temptations? Man is not a being to be governed by principles, detached from an overawing power. Set them in the best array that you can in his mind, to fight the evil powers within and from without, but refuse them weapons from the armory of heaven—let no lightning of the Divine eye, no thunder of the Divine voice, come in testimony and in aid of their operation—and how soon they will be overwhelmed and trampled down! like the Israelites when deserted of God in their battles, the very ark of God surrendered to the pagans!

12. *Second great commandment.*—This can not be intended in the absolutely and rigorously literal sense; but it *must* be dictated in a meaning which presses severely, all round, on the sphere of exclusive self-love—so severely as to compress and crush that affection into a grievous narrowness of space, unless it can escape into liberty and action some other way, in some modified quality. There *is* a way in which it *can* expand and indulge itself, without violating the solemn law imposed, namely, that self-love or self-interest should be exalted to such a temper that its gratification, its gratification of *itself*, should actually very much consist in promoting *the welfare of others*.

13. *The law to be applied in judging the character and actions of men.*—It is a fatal error to take from the world itself our principles for judging of the world. These must be taken absolutely from the Divine authority, and always kept true to the dictates of that; for nothing can be more absurd (not to say pernicious) than to have a set of rules different from them. Therefore it is as in the temple, and at the oracles of God, that the principles are to be received and fixed, to go out with for judging of what we behold. And a frequent recourse must be had thither, to confirm and keep them pure. The principles are thus to be something independent, and as it were sovereign, above that which they are to be applied to. But instead of this, a great part of mankind let their principles for judging be formed by that world itself which they are to observe and judge. They have for judging by, a whole set of apprehensions, notions, maxims, moral and religious, not at all identical with the Divine dictates. Therefore, not through any virtue of candor or charity, but through false principles, they perceive but little evil [sin, folly] in many of the “works done,” which the high and pure authority condemns. They do not see the beam of “fiery indignation,” which, from Heaven, strikes here and there; they do not see shrivelled into insignificance many things which the world accounts most important. It does not come full out in their sight how far the actions of men agree, or not agree, with their awful future prospects.

14. *Conscience the monitor of the Divine law.*—Conscience is to communicate with something mysteriously great, which is without the soul, and above it, and everywhere. It is the sense, more explicit or obscure, of standing in judgment before the Almighty. That which makes a man feel so, is a part of himself; so that the struggle against God becomes a struggle with man's own soul. There-

fore conscience has often been denominated "the God in man."

15. *The facilities of conscience for applying the Divine law.*—Now conscience, by having its dwelling deep within, has a great advantage as a judge in comparison of outward observers. It is seated with its lamp down in the hidden world among the vital sentiments and movements at the radical depth of the dispositions, at the very springs of action, among the thoughts, motives, intentions, and wishes.

16. *Conscience restrains from violating the law.*—The infinite multitude of criminals would have been still more criminal but for this. It has often struck an irresolution, a timidity, into the sinner, by which his intention has been frustrated. Its bitter and vindictive reproaches after sin, have prevented so speedy or frequent repetitions of the sin. It has prevented the *whole* man from being gratified by sin; it has been one dissentient power among his faculties, as if, among a company of gay revellers, there should appear one dark and frowning intruder, whom they could neither conciliate nor expel.

17. *Conscience will minister in executing the penalty of the law.*—We foresee that it will awake! and with an intensity of life and power proportioned to this long sleep, as if it had been growing gigantic during its slumber. It will rise up with all that superiority of vigor with which the body will rise at the resurrection. It will awake!—probably in the last hours of life. But if not—it will nevertheless awake! In the other world there is something which will certainly awake it at the last day.

18. *Conscience perverted obscures the distinctions of the law.*—One most disastrous circumstance is instantly presented to our thoughts, namely, that with by far the greatest number of men that have lived, conscience has been separated from all true knowledge of God. All heathens, of all ages and countries; with but lit-

the limitation the same may be said of the Mohammedans; and to a very great extent it is true of the papists. The superior and eternal order of principles is nearly out of sight, as in some countries they rarely see the sun or the stars.

19. *Conscience made unfaithful to the law.*—Supposing the whole of what the Divine law condemns, and therefore conscience ought, to be measured by a scale of one hundred degrees of aggravation—then the censure beginning at one, will become extremely severe by the time of rising to fifty. But let this first fifty be struck off, as harmless, in accommodation to the general notions and customs—what then? Why then, conscience will but begin, and in slight terms, its censures at the fifty-first degree, and so, at the very top of the scale, will pronounce with but just that emphasis which was due at the point where it began.

20. *Modes of evading the law.*—(1.) The bold, direct, decisive one, is—infidelity: to deny the existence of the Supreme Lawgiver himself. Then the Sovereign Voice is silent. Then the destruction of the Divine law takes, as it were, from the centre instead of by a contraction of its wide extension. Then all things are right which men wish, and can, and dare do; right, as to any concern of conscience—the practical regulations which atheists would feel the necessity for, would be only a matter of policy and mutual self-defence.

(2.) To reject a revelation is an expedient little less summary and effectual for the purpose. A God believed or supposed, but making no declaration of his will and the retribution, would give very little disturbance to sinners. For as to what has been termed natural religion, though a fine systematic theory may be framed, it is, for anything like practical effect, no more than a dream. It was so among the bulk of the cultivated heathens; and now the rejecters of

revelation would be sure not to allow themselves to be defrauded of their advantage by admitting anything more than they liked of the rules and authority of natural religion.

(3.) By the indulgence of sin, not only in action or thought, but also in the heart. It is by the understanding and the conscience that the Divine law is to be apprehended in its amplitude. Now nothing is more notorious than the baneful effect which indulged and practised sin has on both these. It inflicts a grossness on the understanding, which renders it totally unadapted to take cognizance of anything which is to be spiritually discerned—as unadapted as our bodily senses are to perceive spirits. It throws a thick obscurity over the whole vision of the Divine law, so that nothing of it is distinctly perceived, except where sometimes some part of it breaks out in thunder. The conscience partakes the stupefaction—is insensible to a thousand accusations and menaces of the Divine law, every one of which ought to have been pungent and painful.

(4.) The general operation of self-love. The being has a certain sense of not being in a state of peace and harmony with God, but of alienation, opposition, and in a degree hostility, but still devotedly loves itself. It has therefore a set of self-defensive feelings against him. But since it could not defend itself against his power, it endeavors to defend itself against his law. It ventures to question the necessity or propriety of one point of his law; refuses to admit the plain interpretation of another, or to admit the clear inferences from undeniable rules. It makes large portions of the Divine law refer to other men and times; to special and transient occasions and circumstances; is ingenious in inventing exemptions for itself; weakens the force of both the meaning and the authority of the Divine dictates which it can not avert from their application to itself. Thus it “renders

void" much of both the spirit and the letter ; and thus places itself amid a dwindled and falsified system of the Divine legislation.

(5.) The influence of the customs and maxims of the world. For a moment, suppose these admitted to constitute the supreme law and standard. Let all that these adjudge superfluous, be left out and rejected ; all that these account indifferent, be set down so ; all that these warrant by practice, be formally sanctioned ; all that these pronounce honorable and admirable, be inscribed in golden letters ; all that these have settled as true wisdom, be adopted as principles and oracles. Especially, let what the custom and notions of the world have mainly satisfied themselves with in respect to religion be admitted, as the true scheme of our relations and duties to God. This system now !—Let it be placed opposite to the Divine law ! Would it not be like Baal's prophets confronting Elijah ? like Satan propounding doctrine to our Lord ? like a holy angel and the devil looking in each other's face ? But, think !—this is actually the system on which the notions and habits of the multitude are formed ! Thus the Divine law, in its exceeding breadth, is made, as it is said of the heavens, to "depart as a scroll that is rolled together."

(6.) A notion and a feeling as if, man being so very imperfect a creature, it can not be that there is an absolutely perfect law in authority over him. It is impossible for him to meet such a law in full conformity, and therefore it is a moderate and more indulgent one that he is responsible to. But where is there any declaration of such a law ? What can the idea really mean, but a tolerance and approval of something that is evil ? Something different from that which is perfect—less than—what can this be but evil ? Shall there be a law from the holy God to sanction evil, because man is evil ?

(7.) The plea of grace, which pretends to absolve

Christians from the claims of the sovereign rule, because their justification is on an entirely different ground. So that they stand as independent of the law as he is who appointed it. There are different degrees in which this odious heresy is made a practical principle. A spirit truly renewed through divine grace, becomes an emphatic approver of the law. It is a reflection of the character of Him whom he adores, and wishes to resemble.

CHAPTER IV.

VIEWS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND
SOCIAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN.

1. *Sinful nature of man disclosed by his acts.*—Look at the general qualities of actions over this wide world, and think what they collectively testify of *man*! And in noticing men's actions in the detail, it will be a useful exercise and habit to trace them back to what they proceed from in the nature of man, and what they therefore show to be in that nature. Human nature discloses itself freely, fully, and fearlessly, in some men; with caution, art, and partial concealment, in others. But a multitude of unequivocal manifestations of all its attributes will present themselves to the attentive observer. It is of course that he ought to maintain candor or rather say equity; but he is not to let go the plain maxim that the fruits show the tree. . . . For whence does all the evil in action come from? Is the heart becoming drained into purity, by so much evil having come from it? Alas! there is a perennial fountain, unless a Divine hand close it.
2. *Ruling passions of man selfish.*—The main strength of human feelings consists in the love of sensual gratification, of distinction, of power, and of money.
3. *The vast amount of wickedness, repressed by menaced retribution, to be charged to the account of human nature.*—The man inclined to perpetrate an iniquity, of the nature of a wrong to his fellow-mortals,

is apprized that he shall provoke a reaction, to resist or punish him; that he shall incur as great an evil as that he is disposed to do, or greater; that either a revenge regardless of all formalities of justice will strike him, or a process instituted in organized society will vindictively reach his property, liberty, or life. This defensive array, of all men against all men, compels to remain shut up within the mind an immensity of wickedness which is there burning to come out into action. . . . It is not very uncommon to hear credit given to human nature, apparently in sober simplicity, for the whole amount of the negation of bad actions *thus* prevented, as just so much genuine virtue, by some dealers in moral and theological speculation.

4. *Civil law and philosophy can not avail fully to repress depravity.*—There was nothing to insinuate or to force its way into the recesses of the soul, to apply *there* a repressive power to the depraved ardor which glowed in the passions. That was left, inaccessible and inextinguishable, as the subterranean fires in a volcanic region. . . . Reflect on the extent of human genius, in its powers of invention, combination, and adaptation; and then think of all this faculty—in an immense number of minds, through many ages, and in every imaginable variety of situation, exerted with unremitting activity in aid of the wrong propensities.

5. *Philosophers overlooking the moral perversion of human nature blind guides.*—Here in a moral sense are wheels that will not turn—springs without elasticity—levers that break in the application of their force; and you tell me there is no radical fault in the machinery! One thing is clear, that I can never learn from instructors like you, how to have the miserable disorder rectified. You know too little of mankind—about yourselves—about the great standard.

6. *Reproductive power of moral evil.*—It is per-

petually invigorated by the very destruction which it works; as if it fed upon the slain to strengthen itself for new slaughter, and absorbed into its own, every life which it takes away. For it is in the nature of moral evil, as acting on human beings, to create to itself new facilities, means, and force, for prolonging that action. And to what a dreadful perfection of evil might such a race attain but for death, that cuts the term of individuals so short, and but for the Spirit of God, that converts some, and puts a degree of restraint on the rest.

7. *Depravity impressed upon the chief works of man.*—False religion that has raised so many superb temples, of which the smallest remaining ruins bear an impressive character of grandeur; that has prompted the creation, from shapeless masses of substance, of so many beautiful or monstrous forms, representing fabulous super-human and divine beings; and that has produced some of the most stupendous works intended as abodes, or monuments, of the dead. It is the evil next in eminence, war, that has caused the earth to be embossed with so many thousands of massy structures in the form of towers and defensive walls—so many remains of ancient camps—so many traces of the labors by which armies overcame the obstacles opposed to them by rivers, rocks, or mountains—and so many triumphal edifices raised to perpetuate the glory of conquerors. It is the oppressive self-importance of imperial tyrants, and of their inferior commanders of human toils, that has erected those magnificent residences which make a far greater figure in our imagination, than the collective dwellings of the humbler population of a whole continent, and that has in some spots thrown the surface of the earth into new forms.

8. *Character of the mass not to be inferred from individual examples of virtue.*—There was perhaps a learned and vigorous monarch, and there were

Cecils, and Walsinghams, and Shaksperes, and Sidneys, and Spencers, with many other powerful thinkers and actors, to render it the proudest age of our national glory. And we thoughtlessly admit on our imagination this splendid exhibition as in some manner involving or implying the collective state of the people in that age ! The ethereal summits of a tract of the moral world are conspicuous and fair in the lustre of heaven, and we take no thought of the immensely greater proportion of it which is sunk in gloom and covered with the shadows of ignorance and vice.

9. *Wickedness amid scenes of beauty.*—That there is a luxuriant verdure—that there are flowers—rich fields—fruitful trees—pleasing sounds, and tastes, and odors—streams—soft gales—picturesque landscapes—what is all this as set against the other fact, that there are—in almost infinite mass, and number, and variety—bad dispositions and passions—bad principles—wicked thoughts—vile language—impieties and crimes of all *possible* kinds ?

10. *Appalling aspect of man's depravity.*—Considering man in this view, the sacred oracles have represented him as a more melancholy object than Nineveh or Babylon in ruins ; and an infinite aggregate of obvious facts confirms the doctrine.

11. *Popular moral ignorance.* The masses in a condition analogous to what their physical existence would have been under a total and permanent eclipse of the sun. It was perpetual night in their souls, with all the phenomena incident to night, except the sublimity.

12. *A figure of the moral state of the world.*—The right state of the sun is to be one full orb of radiance ; that though there be some small spots and dimmer points, it should be in effect a complete and glorious luminary ! Imagine then if you can this effulgence extinguished, and turned to blackness over all its glo-

rious face, excepting here and there a most diminutive point, emitting one bright ray like a small star. What a ghastly phenomena! and if it continued so the utter ruin of the system. But such we behold the condition of the human race. . . . In the incalculable human mass of a whole idolatrous world, we are shown here and there an individual, or a diminutive combination of individuals, little shining particles, specimens of what the *right state of the world would have been*.

13. *Aggregate view of the history of the world appalling.*—I have sometimes thought, if the *sun* were an *intelligence*, he would be horribly incensed at the world he is appointed to enlighten; such a tale of ages, exhibiting a tiresome repetition of stupidity, follies, and crimes.

14. *Common persuasion of human depravity.*—We have such an habitual persuasion of the general depravity of human nature, that in falling among strangers we always *reckon on* their being irreligious, till we discover some specific indication of the contrary.

15. *Popular ignorance intercepts the rays of moral illumination.*—Utter ignorance is a most effectual fortification to a bad state of the mind. Prejudice may perhaps be removed; unbelief may be reasoned with; even demoniacs have been compelled to bear witness to the truth; but the stupidity of confirmed ignorance not only defeats the ultimate efficacy of the means for making men wiser and better, but stands in preliminary defiance to the very act of their application. It reminds us of an account, in one of the relations of the French Egyptian campaigns, of the attempt to reduce a garrison posted in a bulky fort of mud. Had the defences been of timber, the besiegers might have set fire to and burnt them; had they been of stone, they might have shaken and ultimately breached them by the battery of their can-

non; or they might have undermined and blown them up. But the huge mound of mud had nothing susceptible of fire or any other force; the missiles from the artillery were discharged but to be buried in the dull mass; and all the means of demolition were baffled. . . . He finds, as he might expect to find, that a conscience without knowledge has never taken but a very small portion of the man's habits of life, under its jurisdiction; and that it is a most hopeless thing to attempt to send it back reinforced, to reclaim and conquer, through all the past, the whole extent of its rightful but never assumed dominion.

16. *Stupidity of ignorant wickedness at the approach of death.*—They had actually never thought enough of death to have any solemn associations with the idea. And their faculties were become so rigidly shrunk up, that they could not now admit them; no, not while the portentous spectre was unveiling his visage to them, in near and still nearer approach; not when the element of another world was beginning to penetrate through the rents of their mortal tabernacle. It appeared that literally their thoughts *could not* go out from what they had been through life immersed in, to contemplate, with any realizing feeling, a grand change of being, expected so soon to come on them. They could not go to the fearful brink to look off. It was a stupor of the soul not to be awakened but by the actual plunge into the realities of eternity. "I hope it will please God soon to release me," was the expression to his religious medical attendant of such an ignorant and insensible mortal within an hour of his death which was evidently and directly brought on by his vices.

17. *Portentous aspect of masses of human beings perishing for lack of knowledge.*—We have often mused, and felt a gloom and dreariness spreading over the mind while musing, on descriptions of the aspect of a country after a pestilence has left it in

desolation, or of a region where the people are perishing by famine. It has seemed a mournful thing to behold, in contemplation, the multitude of lifeless forms, occupying in silence the same abodes in which they had lived, or scattered upon the gardens, fields, and roads; and then to see the countenances of the beings yet languishing in life, looking despair, and impressed with the signs of approaching death. We have even sometimes had the vivid and horrid picture offered to our imagination, of a number of human creatures shut up by their fellow-mortals in some stronghold, under an entire privation of sustenance; and presenting each day their imploring, or infuriated, or grimly sullen, or more calmly woful countenances, at the iron and impregnable grates; each succeeding day more haggard, and miserable, more perfect in the image of despair; and after a while appearing each day one fewer, till at last all have sunk. Now shall we feel it as a *relief* to turn in thought, as to a sight of less portentous evil, from the inhabitants of a country, or from those of such an accursed prison-house, thus pining away, to behold the different spectacle of national tribes, or any more limited portion of mankind, on whose *minds* are displayed the full effects of knowledge denied; who are under the process of whatever destruction it is, that spirits can suffer from want of the vital aliment to the intelligent nature, especially from "a famine of the words of the Lord?" . . . Since that period when ancient history, strictly so named, left off describing the state of mankind, more than a myriad of millions of our race have been on earth, and quitted it without one ray of the knowledge the most important to spirits sojourning here, and going hence.

18. *Retrospect of the heathen world.*—We can not look that way but we see the whole field covered with inflictors and sufferers, not seldom interchanging those characters. If that field widens to our view, it

is still, to the utmost line to which the shade clears away, a scene of cruelty, oppression, and slavery ; of the strong trampling on the weak, and the weak often attempting to bite at the feet of the strong ; of rancorous animosities and murderous competitions of persons raised above the mass of the community ; of treacheries and massacres ; and of war, between hordes, and cities, and nations, and empires—war *never*, in spirit, intermitted, and suspended sometimes in act only to acquire renewed force for destruction, or to find another assemblage of hated creatures to cut in pieces.

19. *State of the pagan world.*—While the immense aggregate is displayed to the mental view, as pervaded, agitated, and stimulated, by the restless forces of appetites and passions, and those forces operating with an impulse no less perverted than strong, let it be asked what kinds and measure of restraint there could be upon such a world of creatures so actuated, to keep them from rushing in all ways into evil.

20. *Thick darkness of Romanism intimated by the sombre shadows still resting on nations and the church.*—Indeed, the thickness of the preceding darkness was strikingly manifested by the deep shade which still continued stretched over the nation, in spite of the newly-risen luminary, whose beams lost their brightness in pervading it to reach the popular mind, and came with the faintness of an obscured and tedious dawn.

21. *Savage state.*—But he would become sober enough, if compelled to travel a thousand miles through the desert, or over the snow, with some of these subjects of his lectures and legislation ; to accompany them in a hunting excursion ; to choose in a stormy night between exposure in the open air and in the smoke and grossness of their cabins ; to observe the intellectual faculty narrowed almost to a point, limited to a scanty number of the meanest

class of ideas; to find by repeated experiments that *his* kind of ideas could neither reach their understanding nor excite their curiosity; to see the ravenous appetite of wolves succeeded for a season by a stupidity insensible even to the few interests which kindle the utmost ardor of a savage; to witness loathsome habits occasionally diversified by abominable ceremonies; or to be for once the spectator of some of the circumstances which accompany the wars of savages.

22. *Depravity a barrier to the beneficent operation of government.*—No form of government will be practically good, as long as the nations to be governed are in a controversy, by their vices and irreligion, with the Supreme Governor.

23. *Depravity assimilates civil institutions to its own standard.*—It will pervert even the very schemes and operations by which the world would be improved, though their first principles were pure as Heaven; and revolutions, great discoveries, augmented science, and new forms of polity, will become in effect what may be denominated the sublime mechanics of depravity.

24. *Of an extremely depraved child.*—I never saw so much *essence of devil* put in so small a vessel.

25. *The pagan world—its degrading rites, degraded population, and evidences of spiritual death.*—Let him [the observer] enter a country where the majestic idea of a Deity, originally imparted to our race, is transmuted into an endless miscellany of fantastic and odious fables, in what are esteemed the sacred books, and in the minds of that small proportion of the inhabitants that read them; and where the mass of millions, together too with the more cultivated few, fall prostrate in adoration of the rudest pieces of mud and lumber that their own hands can shape. Let him walk out from his retired room or tent, after his soul has been raised in prayer to a real and an infi-

nite Being, and approach one of those many shrines, which, in a populous district, he may see deforming the country around him, and behold a number of creatures in his own shape fixed in petrified reverence, or performing grave ritual antics, before a filthy figure, or sometimes an unshaped lump of wood or stone, daubed black and red, which piece of rubbish, without a shape, or in a shape more vile and ugly than it is possible for European hands to make, stands there in substitution for that Infinite Spirit which he has just been worshipping : it stands for the most part in real and perfect substitution ; but if it were in representation, the case would be very little better. . . . Let him observe, as performed at the dictate of the laws, customs, and priests, of this superstition, such barbarous and whimsical self-inflicted penances and torture, and such sacrifices of living relatives, as it would be supposed some possessing fiend had compelled the wretched pagans to adopt for his diversion ; let him observe, amid these tyrannic rigors of a super-conscience, an entire want of conscience with respect to the great principles of morality, and the extinction in a great degree of the ordinary sympathies of human nature for suffering objects ; let him notice the deceitful and cruel character of the priest, exactly conformable to the spirit of the superstition ; and let him consider those unnatural but insuperable distinctions of the classes of society, which equally degrade the one by a stupid servility, and the other by a stupid pride. And, finally, let him reflect that each day many thousands of such deluded creatures are dying, destitute of all that knowledge, those consolations, and those prospects, for which he adores the author of the Christian revelation. How would he be able to quell the sentiment of horror which would arise in his mind at every view and every thought of what we have thus supposed him to witness ? He would feel as if something demoniac in-

fested all the land and pervaded all the air, inspiring a general madness previous to a general execution. For he would feel an unconquerable impression that a land could not be so abandoned of the Divine mercy, but to be soon visited by the Divine vengeance; and that vengeance he would hardly at some moments be able to deprecate, while beholding the occasional extraordinary excesses of frantic abomination. It would appear to him that the very time was come for a glorious display of justice, and that such a solitude as Noah found, on descending from the ark, would be a delightful sequel to this populous and raging tumult of impiety. . . . A moral sense that belongs to man is wanting in them; so that infinitely the most important of the elements and phenomena of the world are unapparent and impalpable to them: just as much so as that class of things and properties are to our present five senses, which might, as Locke observes, have been perceptible to us by means of a sixth or seventh sense, which the Creator could no doubt have given us. To these men, all the concerns and interests designated by the terms divine, spiritual, immortal, are nearly the same as non-existent.

26. *Depravity evinced in a universal tendency to social deterioration.*—All political institutions will probably, from whatever cause, tend to become worse by time. If a system were now formed, that should meet all the philosopher's and the philanthropist's wishes, it would still have the same *tendency*; only I do hope that henceforward to the end of time, men's minds will be intensely awake to the nature and operation of their institutions; so that after a new era shall commence, governments shall not slide into depravity without being keenly watched, nor be watched without the sense and spirit to arrest their deterioration.

27. *The formidable prevalence of evil an inscrutable mystery.*—The prevalence of evil in only this one

world, is an inexpressibly mysterious and awful fact ; insomuch, that all attempts to explain *how* it is consistent with the perfect goodness of an Almighty Being, have left us in utter despair of any approach toward comprehending it. A pious spirit, not deluded by any of the vain and presumptuous theories of philosophical or theological explanation, while looking toward this unfathomable subject, can repose only in a general confidence that the dreadful fact, of the prevalence of evil in this planet, is in some unimaginable way combined with such relations, and such a state of the grand whole of the divine empire, that it is perfectly consistent with infinite goodness in Him that made and directs all things.

28. *Depravity evinced by formidable opposition to the progress of religion, and relentless persecution of the witnesses to the truth in successive ages.*—Through a vast space of past time, there has been only a most diminutive number on the whole earth, of such as truly knew, and feared, and served God. And during periods in which they have been a somewhat more perceptible portion of the race, think how the world has often treated them ; as if they were foreigners and intruders, occupying a place to which they had no right. A very considerable portion of the history of the world, is a record of the persecutions that have raged against them. Monarchs, with the co-operation of their counsellors, captains, priests, and the ignorant brutish multitude, have ever sought to make it a chief distinction and glory of their reigns that they zealously endeavored the destruction of the saints of the Most High. . . . The malignity of human nature, has appeared tenfold malignant when vented in the direction of hostility to true religion. It has then glared out a fiend, delighting and luxuriating in savage barbarity.

CHAPTER V.

VIEWS OF CHRISTIANITY.—ITS DOCTRINES AND APPLICATIONS.

1. *Compendiousness of the Christian scheme.*—There is a sublime economy of invisible realities. There is the Supreme Existence, an infinite and eternal Spirit. There are spiritual existences, that have kindled into brightness and power, from nothing, at his creating will. There is a universal government, omnipotent, all-wise, and righteous, of that Supreme Being over the creation. There is the immense tribe of human spirits, in a most peculiar and alarming predicament, held under eternal obligation of conformity to a law proceeding from the holiness of that Being, but perverted to a state of disconformity to it, and opposition to him. Next, there is a signal anomaly of moral government, the constitution of a new state of relation between the Supreme Governor and this alienated race, through a Mediator, who makes an atonement for human iniquity, and stands representative before Almighty Justice, for those who in grateful accordance to the mysterious appointment consign themselves to his charge. There are the several doctrines declaratory of this new constitution through all its parts. There is the view of religion in its operative character, or the doctrine of the application of its truths and precepts by a divine agency to transform the mind and rectify the life. And this solemn array of all the sublimest reality, and most important intelligence, is extending infinitely away

beyond the sensible horizon of our present state to an invisible world, to which the spirits of men proceed at death for judgment and retribution, and with the prospect of living for ever.

2. *Salvation by the law impossible.*—The plan by the law was evidently an utterly ruined plan ; it could not save one ; it could only condemn to perish. If men were to be saved, and still upon the original economy, it was to be independently of the law, and in opposition to it. But, independently, and in opposition ! Who would make them independent ? Who would bear them harmless in that opposition ? If the divine goodness in the form of *mercy* would do it—what became of the divine goodness in the form of *righteousness* ? Should the rebellious creatures utterly violate and demolish the economy of justice, and come triumphant out of its ruin as having forced the Supreme Governor to the bare expedient of mercy ?

3. *A Savior unappreciated without acknowledgment of sin.*—While man is not considered as lost, the mind can not do justice to the expedient, or to “the only name under heaven,” by which he can be redeemed. Accordingly the gift of Jesus Christ does not appear to be habitually recollected as the most illustrious instance of the beneficence of God that has ever come to human knowledge, and as the single fact which, more than all others, has relieved the awfulness of the mystery in which our world is enveloped. No thankful joy seems to beam forth at the thought of so mighty an interposition, and of him who was the agent of it.

4. *Necessity of atonement.*—Think intently on the malignant nature of sin ; and if there be truth in God, it is inexpressibly odious to him. Then, if nevertheless, such sinners are to be pardoned, does it not eminently comport with the divine holiness—is it not due to it—that in the very medium of their pardon,

there should be some signal and awful act of a judicial and penal kind to record and render memorable for ever a righteous God's judgment—estimate of *that* which he pardons ?

5. *Comfortable reliance upon the atonement.*—With this self-condemning review, and with nothing but an uncertain and possibly small remainder of life in prospect, how emphatically oppressive would be the conscious situation, if there were not that great propitiation, that redeeming sacrifice, to rest upon for pardon and final safety.

6. *A divine liberator from the prejudices and passions of depravity necessary.*—Many are in subjection to their appetites ; many to the most foolish, many to the most vicious passions. Now to them, what an inconsiderable good is their political liberty, as compared with the evil of this slavery ! and yet, amid it all, there is the self-complacency, the pride, the boasting of freedom !

Take another exemplification. A high-spirited man in very independent circumstances, with confidence and self-sufficiency conspicuous on his front ; in numberless cases he can and will do as he pleases ; he has the means of commanding deference and obsequiousness, defies and spurns interference and opposition ; and says "I am free !" For all this, perhaps, he is but the stronger slave. All the while, his whole mind and moral being may be utterly servile to some evil passion, some corrupt purpose, some vain interest, some tyrannic habit. . . . The mass of mankind are enslaved. The cool, sagacious, philosophic observer thinks so. The devout Christian observer thinks so. The illuminated dying estimator thinks so. And all the real friends of our race would unite to implore that the truth might come to perform its mighty work ; or, in other words, that the glorious Agent of human deliverance, the Son of God would come and accomplish that work by means of "the

truth." If we would form a notion quite comprehensive of what may be regarded as placing and keeping men's minds in an enslaved state, we should include ignorance and all error through which they receive injury, together with all perversion in the passions, and all that perverts them. Now against all this in its full breadth, truth, universal truth, is opposed; and the effectual application of truth would counteract and reverse it all. . . . Here is the grand and urgent occasion for the Spirit of God to work—to transfuse a new and redeeming principle through the moral being, and then the man is free! The freed spirit feels that a hateful, direful enchantment is broken, and flies to its God.

7. *Mystery of the origin of evil.*—We must confess we should think that the less use is made in religion the better, of philosophizings which are precipitate toward that black abyss. It really would appear to us, that abstract reasonings on will, and power, and accountableness, in relation to man, can afford no assistance, none, toward the fundamental removal of theological difficulties; and that the only resource, in a matter like that to which we have been adverting, is in a simple submissive acceptance of the dictates, and adherence to the practice, of the inspired teachers, and of their Teacher.

8. *Technical terms should be used sparingly in distinguishing Christian doctrines.*—Technical terms have been the lights of science, but, in many instances, the shades of religion.

9. *Gospel demeaned by bigoted interpreters.*—You might often meet with a systematic writer, in whose hands the whole wealth, and variety, and magnificence, of revelation, shrink into a meager list of doctrinal points, and who will let no verse in the Bible say a syllable till it has placed itself under one of them. You may meet with a Christian polemic, who seems to value the arguments for evangelical truth

as an assassin values his dagger, and for the same reason; with a descanter on the invisible world, who makes you think of a popish cathedral, and from the vulgarity of whose illuminations you are excessively glad to escape into the solemn twilight of faith; or with a grim zealot for a theory of the Divine attributes, which seems to delight in representing the Deity as a dreadful king of furies, whose dominion is overshadowed with vengeance, whose music is the cries of victims, and whose glory requires to be illustrated by the ruin of his creation.

10. *Ignorance and bigotry in Christian profession.*—Some people's religion is for want of *sense*; if they had this, they would have no religion, for their religion is no more than prejudice—superstition.

11. *Specimen of a religious bigot.*—[Said of a narrow-minded religionist.] Mr. T. sees religion, not as a *sphere*, but as a *line*; and it is the identical line in which *he* is moving. He is like an African buffalo—sees right forward, but nothing on the right hand or the left. He would not perceive a legion of angels or of devils at the distance of ten yards, on the one side or the other.

12. *Cowardice of bigoted errorists.*—When the majestic form of Truth approaches, it is easier for a disingenuous mind to start aside into a thicket till she is past, and then reappearing, say, "It was not Truth," than to meet her, and bow, and obey.

13. *The lines of revelation and true philosophy coalesce and become identical.*—Theology and philosophy have been entirely separated by most divines, and some have attempted an awkward association of them; they joined them without producing unity or union. All the emanations of both ought to converge to one focus; and thence, combined and identified, dart forward, a living beam of light, *in infinitum*.

14. *Metaphors of Scripture should not be forced to an undue application.*—It is degrading to spiritual

ideas to be extensively and systematically transmuted, I might say *cooked*, into sensual ones. The analogy between meaner things and dignified ones should never be pursued further than one or two points of necessary illustration ; for if it is traced to every circumstance in which a resemblance can be found or fancied, the meaner thing no longer serves the humble and useful purpose of merely illustrating some qualities of the great one, but becomes formally its representative and equal. By their being made to touch at all points, the meaner is constituted a scale to measure and to limit the magnitude of the superior, and thus the importance of the one shrinks to the insignificance of the other.

15. *The character and offices of Christ better distinguished by the language of Scripture than of creeds.*—As to my opinion respecting the person of Christ, I deem it the wisest rule to use *precisely the language of scripture*, without charging myself with a definite, a sort of mathematical hypothesis, and the interminable perplexities of explication and inference.

16. *Want of discrimination in distinguishing the righteous and the wicked.*—Have you not had a sense of extreme absurdity, in hearing or reading some religious teachers, representing two classes as complete antipodes, without regard to discrimination and *degrees* ? Let a carnal, unconverted man be described, and the character consists of the whole account of human depravity. But let them describe a converted man, and there is just the entire reverse. But where is the man that will dare to present himself as this complete reverse ?

17. *Deep sense of unworthiness proper to the most moral—even the young.*—That such a mind should feel any violent sense of guilt, or overwhelming terrors of Divine justice, it would be out of all consistency to expect or require. But I *am* anxious that he should feel an impressive *general* conviction of a

depraved and unworthy nature, and the necessity of pardon and reconciliation through Jesus Christ; that he should especially be sensible of the evil and guilt of a deficient love and devotion to God, and of the indisposition to apply the thoughts, desires, and earnest efforts, to the grand business of life. This order of conviction and solicitude I wish and pray that he may feel, and then, after a life so nearly blameless, in a *practical* view, I should be greatly consoled and assured.

18. *Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.*—Repose your soul, with all its interests and hopes, on that perfect work of our Lord and Savior. It is a complete salvation for you to rely upon, independent of any virtues, and in triumph over conscious and lamented sins in your own nature. It is expressly as being unable to attain virtues and grace to satisfy the Divine law and an enlightened conscience—exactly as being conscious of defect and sin which you condemn and deplore—it is in this very character and condition that you are to embrace the salvation accomplished through the sufferings of the Redeemer. And it comes to you in a Divine fullness which pardons all sin, and needs no virtues of your own for your acceptance before the righteous Judge. It sets aside at once all that you can attain, and all that you condemn, in yourself and of your own, and gives you a blessed acquittance on another ground. It makes no stipulation or previous condition for some certain established degrees of one virtuous principle or another in your soul. It tells you that all the degrees of all the virtues are equally incompetent and foreign to the great purpose, and invites and conjures you to cast yourself wholly on the all-sufficiency of Him in whom all fullness of merit and righteousness dwells. It avowedly takes you as defective and sinful, notwithstanding all that you labor and strive, and says “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away sin.”

How constantly, through the New Testament, is it represented that this committing of the soul to the merciful and exalted Savior, *just as it is*, with all its conscious weakness, incapacity, and self-condemnation, is the grand point of safety and immortal hope, is the escape from the oppression of guilt and the fear of death!

19. *Uniform use of peculiar phrases in the pulpit not desirable.*—Such common words as have acquired an affected cast in theological use, might give place to the other common words which express the ideas in a plain and unaffected manner; and the phrases formed of common words uncouthly combined may be dismissed. Many peculiar and antique words might be exchanged for other single words, of equivalent signification, and in general use. And the small number of peculiar terms acknowledged and established as of permanent use and necessity, might, even separately from the consideration of modifying the diction, be often, with advantage to the explicit declaration and clear comprehension of Christian truth, made to give place to a fuller expression, in a number of common words, of those ideas of which these peculiar terms are the single signs.

20. *Existence and ministry of angels.*—No fact beyond the limits of our world is more prominent in the declarations of the Bible, than the existence of a high order of intelligences denominated angels. The equivocal and the lower application of the term in a number of instances can deduct nothing from the palpable evidence of the fact. But who and what are angels? The effect of an assemblage of passages relating to them in the Bible, the descriptions, narratives, and allusions, would seem to give an idea widely different from that of stationary residents in particular parts of the creation—an idea, rather, of perpetual ministerial agency, in a diversified distribution of appointments, many of them occasional and

temporary, in the fulfilment of which numbers of them visit or sojourn in this world.

21. *Rank and sphere of angels.*—If we take our conjecture of the intellectual magnitude, and the probable excursive powers of the highest of the created beings, from the consideration of the infinite power and beneficence of the Creator, and of what it is rationally probable that such a Being would create in the nature of mental existences, to admire, adore, and serve him, we shall be warranted to imagine beings to whom it may be possible exultingly to leave sunbeams far behind them in the rapidity of their career, from systems to systems still beyond. And if we add to the account the equal probability of a perpetual augmentation of their powers in a ratio correspondent to a magnitude already so stupendous, and crown it with the idea of an indefatigable exertion of those powers in discovery and contemplation of the Creator's manifestations through everlasting ages—there will then be required a universe to which all that the telescope has descried is but as an atom; a universe of which it shall not be within the *possibilities* of any intelligence less than the Infinite to know—

“Where rears the terminating pillar high
Its extramundane head.”

22. *Kingdom of God on earth and in heaven connected by vital sympathies.*—The kingdom of God on earth is in real and vital connexion with his kingdom in heaven! So that there is—shall we say it—a sympathy between them; so that where a saint is smitten on earth, there is, as it were, a sensation conveyed to the upper sky. The Lord of saints and angels says, “Saul, why persecutest thou me?” a strange expression of the union of the king of glory, and his humble mortal friends.

23. *Inefficiency of mere means.*—These means are indeed of divine appointment, and to a certain extent

are accompanied by a special divine agency. But how far this agency accompanies them is seen in the measure of their success. Where *that* stands arrested, the fact itself is the proof that the superior operation does not go further with these means. There it stops, and leaves them to accomplish, if they can, what remains. And oh, what remains? If the general transformation of mankind into such persons as could be justly deemed true disciples of Christ, were regarded as the object of his religion, how mysteriously small a part of that object has this divine agency ever yet been exerted to accomplish! And then, the awful and immense remainder evinces the inexpressible imbecility of the means, when left to be applied as a mere human administration. . . . Probably each religious teacher can recollect, besides his general experience, very particular instances, in which he has set himself to exert the utmost force of his mind, in reasoning, illustration, and serious appeal, to impress some one important idea, on some one class of persons to whom it was most specifically applicable; and has perceived the plainest indications, both at the instant and immediately after, that it was an attempt of the same kind as that of demolishing a tower by attacking it with pebbles. Nor do I need to observe how generally, if a momentary impression is made, it is forgotten the following hour.

24. *Melancholy musings in the direction of fatalism.*—One seems to see all *how it is to be*, as to one's friends, as to *one's self*. Unfortunate habits have been formed, and threaten to reign till death. Instruction, truth, just reach the heart to fall inefficacious. One augurs the sequel from the first part; as in a commonplace novel, one can see from the first chapter what is to happen forward to the close.

25. *In its fortification of depraved dispositions and circumstances, the soul defies any assault of mere human power*—Surely the human mind, quenched as

it is in a body, with all that body's sensations, is not a thing to be worked upon by the presentation of truth ! How little, in general, it thinks or cares about the whole displayed firmament of truth, with all its constellations. No ! the case of mankind is desperate, unless a continual miracle interpose.

26. *Vain confidence in human agency.*—If what they deem the cause of truth and justice advances with a splendid front of distinguished names of legislators, or patriots, or military heroes, it must then and must therefore triumph ; nothing can withstand such talents, accompanied by the zeal of so many faithful adherents. If these shining insects of fame are crushed, or sink into the despicable reptiles of corruption, alas, then, for the cause of truth and justice !

27. *Effects disproportionate to any known order of means, may be necessary to the universal triumph of the gospel.*—Perhaps it is not improbable, that the grand moral improvements of the future age may be accomplished in a manner that shall leave nothing to man but humility and grateful adoration. His pride so obstinately ascribes to himself whatever good is effected on the globe, that perhaps the Deity will evince his own interposition, by events as evidently independent of human power as the rising of the sun. It may be that some of them may take place in a manner but little connected even with human operation. Or if the activity of men shall be employed as the means of producing all of them, there will probably be as palpable a disproportion between the instruments and the events, as there was between the rod of Moses and the stupendous phenomena which followed its being stretched forth.

28. *Triumph of the truth through the gospel.*—I have the most confident faith that the empire of truth, advancing under a far mightier agency than mere philosophic inquiry, is appointed to irradiate the latter ages of a dark and troubled world ; and, on the

strength of prophetic intimations, I anticipate its coming sooner, by at least a thousand centuries, than a disciple of that philosophy which rejects revelation, as the first proud step toward the improvement of the world, is warranted, by a view of the past and present state of mankind, to predict.

29. *Inadequate view of the social application of Christianity.*—Christianity is to be honored somewhat after the same manner as the Lama of Thibet. It is to stay in its temple, to have the proprieties of homage duly preserved within its precincts, but to be *exempted* (in reverence of its sanctity) from all cognizance of great public affairs, even in the points where they most interfere with or involve its interests. It could show, perhaps, in what manner the administration of those affairs injures these interests; but it would degrade its sacred character by talking of any such matter. But Christianity must have leave to decline the sinister compliment of such pretended anxiety to preserve it immaculate. As to its sacred character, it can *venture that*, on the strength of its intrinsic quality and of its own guardianship, while, regardless of the limits thus attempted in mock reverence to be prescribed, it steps in a censorial capacity on what will be called a political ground, so far as to take account of what concern has been shown, or what means have been left disposable, for operations to promote the grand essentials of human welfare, by that public system which has grasped and expended the strength of the community.

30. *Amenability of statesmen.*—So long as men are pressing as urgently into the avenues of place and power, as ever the genteel rabble of the metropolis have pushed and crowded into the playhouse to see the new actor, and so long as a most violent conflict is maintained between those who are in power and those who want to supplant them, we think statesmen form by eminence the class of persons to whose char

acters both the contemporary examiner and the historian are not only authorized, but in duty bound, to administer justice in its utmost rigor, without one particle of extenuation. . . . They have stronger inducements, arising from their situation, than other men, to be solicitous for the rectitude of their conduct; their station has the utmost advantage for commanding the assistance of whatever illumination a country contains; they see, on the large scale, the effect of all the grand principles of action; they make laws for the rest of mankind, and they direct the execution of justice. If the eternal laws of morality are to be applied with a soft and lenient hand in the trial and judgment of such an order of men, it will not be worth while to apply them at all to the subordinate classes of mankind; as a morality that exacts but little, where the means and the responsibility are the greatest, would betray itself to contempt by pretending to sit in solemn judgment on the humbler subjects of its authority. The laws of morality should operate, like those of Nature, in the most palpable manner on the largest substances.

31. *Tendency to reform.*—At all events, it is inexpressibly gratifying, on the ground of religion, philanthropy, and all views of improvement, to observe the prominent characteristic of our times; a *mobility*, a tendency to alteration, a shaking, and cracking, and breaking up of the old condition of notions and things; an exploding of the principle, that things are to be maintained *because* they are ancient and established. Even that venerable humbug called “our admirable *constitution*” has suffered woful assault and battery by this recent transaction. This thing, the “constitution,” has been commonly regarded, and talked, and written of (and was so talked of by the opposition in the late debates), as if it were something almost of *divine origin*, as if it had been delivered like the law from the mount, as a thing perfect,

permanent, sacred, and inviolable. But now we have it practically shown, that one of its corners may be demolished without ceremony (Holy Temple though it has been accounted), when the benefit of the community requires an innovation; and therefore so may any other corner or portion of it, when the same cause shall demand.

32. *The elevation of the race possible through wise institutions and statesmen.*—Every day struck with the wretched and barbarous appearance, and the coarse manners of the populace. (This was, I believe, in Lancashire.) How most astonishing that the Creator should have placed so many millions of the creatures he has endowed with noble faculties (or the seeds of them), in situations where these faculties and the whole being are inevitably debased! Wonder again what really could be done by political institutions managed by a Bonaparte in morals. I can not, will not, believe that all must *necessarily be thus*.

33. *Progressive amelioration of the condition of the race through the applications of Christianity.*—Have been a thousand times struck, and very forcibly this morning, with the miserable, degraded, and almost revolting appearance, of the visages, both in features and expression, of the lowest rank of the poor, especially when old. Oh, how little is made of the human species in dignity, refinement, knowledge, and happiness, in comparison with what they *might* become, under the influence of good institutions—of education—of religion, and a state of society which should easily secure a competence without so much labor!

34. *Timid conservatism.*—I have heard a good many of them talk of the subject; and what they say is, that the "Review" *dares* nothing; that its highest ambition seems to be to do no harm; that it takes the style of a puritan divine in some instances where that

of Voltaire would be better; that it is too anxious to preserve a quiet impunity under the wings of orthodoxy and loyalty; that it is like a dog that has been whipped, and therefore but just ventures to growl, and then runs away.

35. *Jurisdiction of civil law may be restricted by conscience.*—An opponent maintained that I ought to contribute to the execution of every law of the state I live in, even though I disapprove some of those laws in my private judgment. Denied. How can such obligation come? It is confessed, in the first instance, that in general my own judgment and conscience form the supreme law. Then, if *one* man assumes to interfere with the dictates of my own mind, and enjoins me a course of action opposite to my convictions, I spurn the assumption. But so I do likewise if *two* men thus dictate in opposition to my moral sense. If *three* men do this, I do still the same. If five hundred, if a thousand, if ten thousand, I still do the same, and deem that duty binds me to do so. I ask these, "What is this thing you call a *state*? what is that moral authority assumed by it over my conscience, if it merely consists of these same men whom individually, and in the accumulation of an indefinite number, I have already refused to obey?"

36. *Individual anticipating and embracing social reform.*—The mind of a reflective man ought, in respect of changes, to be beforehand with the world—to have first achieved each important reform within itself, and to be able to say to other men, "Follow me!"

37. *Ceremonial of ordination liable to be unduly magnified among dissenters.*—In saying all this, I beg you not to take me as if I were making any very grave matter of the thing—as if I fancied this little rag of hierarchy *infected with the plague*, and capable of infusing some mighty mischief into our religious constitution. I merely think it would better comport

with good sense, and with religious simplicity as the dissenters' profession, to abandon such a ceremonial.

38. *Church independence, distinguished from national establishments.*—The dissenters' system (as far as they can have anything that can be so named) is simply to teach and preach religion to such as choose to be taught, forming voluntary societies, and in all ways and senses supporting themselves, in point of expenses and everything else. . . . It is the very manner in which Christianity was originally propagated in the world. How else should or can it be propagated? It is an *immensely* different thing to have a secular establishment, shaped, richly endowed, and supported by the state—a profane and profligate king acknowledged as head of this church, a power in the government (often a most irreligious set of men) to decree the doctrines and observances of religion—a set of wealthy and lordly archbishops and bishops—the institution—constantly made an engine of state—furnished with a clergy to whom personal religion is no prerequisite, and many of them signing articles which they do not believe—constituted in a way to produce ambition, sycophancy to power, and arrogance toward the people—to say not a word of the vast and horrid history of persecution, the *principle* of which is *inherent* in such an invention, and which has made the hierarchy about the blackest spectacle in the retrospect of the Christian era.

39. *Malorganization of national establishments evinced by failure to accomplish their proposed ends.*—If the practical working of an institution be generally, predominantly, through successive ages and all the change of times and circumstances, renegade from the primary intention, this would seem to betray that there must be, in the very construction itself essentially, a strong propensity and aptitude to corruption; that a good design has been committed to the action of a wrong machinery for making it effective; that

the instrument intended for the use of a good spirit, is found commodiously fitted to the hand of a darker agent.

I am not, you will observe, expressing any opinion on the abstract question of the necessity or possible advantage of a religious establishment, but commenting on the actual church establishment of this country. Now, then, I would say to you, with deference, take an impartial view of the English church, through a duration of nearly two centuries, and at the present time. You well know that, with all its amplitude of powers and means—its many thousands of consecrated teachers, of all degrees—its occupancy of the whole country—its prescriptive hold on the people's veneration—its learning, its emoluments, and its intimate connexion with all that was powerful in the state—it did, through successive generations, leave the bulk of the population, for whose spiritual benefit it was appointed, in the profoundest ignorance of what *you* consider as the only genuine Christianity.

40. *Adequate reformation of a national church establishment impossible.*—As an *economical* thing, a trade and money concern, it may be plentifully mended if the axe and saw, and carpenter's rule, be resolutely applied (which I do not expect); but as an *ecclesiastical* institution, an institution for *religion*, it is not worth reforming; indeed, cannot be reformed. Think of making the clergy—such a clergy as the reform-project declares them to be—think of making them pious, zealous, spiritual, apostolic, *by act of parliament*! There is, for example, the scandalous amount of non-residence; this is to be corrected with a strong hand; the clergy shall be compelled to reside: **WHAT** clergy shall be so compelled? why, the very men whose non-residence proved they do not care about the spiritual welfare of the people; but only force these same men, by a law, sadly against their will, as the very terms imply, *and then they will instantly*

become pious, faithful, affectionate pastors—an unspeakable blessing to the people of every parish! They will apply themselves, with the utmost alacrity and assiduity, to their preaching, praying, visiting the sick, &c., at the very time that they are grumbling and cursing at not being any longer allowed to promenade about Brighton or Cheltenham. The most ridiculous absurdity comes of that one grand corruption of Christianity—the *state* pretending to make religious churches and Christian teachers.

41. *Certainty of the prevalence of the simpler and true order of Christianity.*—And dissent, you may be sure, *will* continue to extend, in whatever proportion true religion and free-thinking shall do so, to the ultimate abolition of that anti-Christian nuisance, the established church.

42. *Efficiency of independency.*—I have heard it alleged, that however it might fare with the people in the towns and the districts, thickly inhabited, the rural tracts, with a scanty population, would be left in a total destitution of religious advantages. Did the foretellers of this consequence ever traverse any considerable part of Wales, where they would see an almost endless succession of meeting-houses, in tracts where a few humble-looking habitations, scattered over a wide neighborhood, give immediate evidence of a thin population and the absence of wealth? And, if I am not much misinformed, such proofs of the productive activity of the “dissenting interest,” as it is called, have begun to appear in scores, or rather hundreds, of the thinly-inhabited districts of England; a representation confirmed by the frequent complaints of clergymen in such localities, that their parishes are becoming deformed by such spectacles—“nuisances,” in the language of some of them; “schism-shops” is the denomination I have oftenest heard. The means for raising these edifices have been contributed by the liberality of dissenting communities at a distance,

for the most part, from the places themselves. And, according to my information, the religious services, in many of them, are kept up gratuitously, in consideration of the poverty of the rural attendants, by extra labors of ministers in the nearest situations, assisted by zealous and intelligent religious laymen, possessing and cultivating a faculty for public speaking.

43. *Inefficiency of national church establishments.*—Dissent, as argued and practised by the whole school of our most venerated teachers and examples, has been founded on the plain principle that making religion a part of the state, is anti-Christian in theory and noxious in practice. With consenting voice they would have denied any one *to be* a dissenter who did not hold this doctrine, and desire, in obvious consistency, the abolition of all secular religious establishments. Latterly, all this seems to have been forgotten—very much from the want of instruction, and consequent want of thought, about the real nature and reason of dissent. But I am of the old school—at the same time not caring very much how little the people understand about the theory of the matter, provided religion and practical dissent be making progress. The fundamental principle of dissent is, that the religion of Christ ought to be left to make its way among mankind in the greatest possible simplicity, by its truth and excellence; and through the labors of sincere and pious advocates, under the presiding care of its great Author; and that it can not, without fatal injury to that pure simplicity, that character of being a “kingdom not of this world,” be taken into the schemes and political arrangements of monarchs and statesmen, and implicated inseparably with all the secular interests, intrigues, and passions. It is self-evident it must thus become a sharer in state corruptions, an engine of state acted on, and in its turn acting with, every bad influence belonging so

almost universally to courts, governments, and ambitious parties of worldly men. It might beforehand be pronounced infallibly, that this unhallowed combination must result in the debasement of religion, and in mischief to the best interests of mankind. But from this presumption *à priori*, turn to the matter of fact, as exhibited through the long course of the Christian era. I have latterly been looking a little into ecclesiastical history, at different periods; and should, from what I have seen there, have acquired, had it been possible, an augmented intensity of detestation of hierarchies and secular establishments of religion. There is the whole vast and direful plague of the *popish hierarchy*. But placing that out of view, look at *our own protestant establishment*. What was its spirit and influence during the long period of the sufferings of the puritans? What was its spirit even in the time of Queen Anne? Then follow it down through a subsequent century. *What did it do for the people of England?* There was one wide, settled Egyptian darkness; the blind leading the blind, all but *universally*; an utter estrangement from genuine Christianity; ten thousand Christian ministers misleading the people in respect to religious notions, and a *vast* proportion of them setting them a bad practical example. When at length something of the true light began to dawn—when Whitefield and Wesley came forth—who were their most virulent opposers, even instigating and abetting the miserable people to riot, fury, and violence, against them? *The established clergy*. At a later time, who were the most constant systematic opposers of an improved education of the common people? *The established clergy*. Who frustrated, so lately, Brougham's national plan for this object? *The clergy*, who insisted that *they* should have a monopoly of the power in its management. Who formed the main mass of the opposition to the Bible Society for so many years? *Did one single dis-*

sender so act? No; *the clergy*. Who, lately, did all they could, by open opposition or low intrigue, to frustrate the valuable project for education in our own city? *The clergy*. Who were the most *generally* hostile to the catholic emancipation, undeterred by the prospect of prolonged tumult, and ultimate civil war, ravage, and desolation, in Ireland? *The clergy*. What is, at this very hour, the most fatal and withering blight on the interests and hopes of the protestant religion in that country? *The established church*.

44. *Indictment against the national establishment.—Impossibility of its reform.*—This slight series of notices affords but a faint and meager hint of the large and awful indictment against the established church. And that indictment is, by the whole school of the able advocates of *dissent on principle*, charged in this form, namely: that such are the *natural effects* of a *secular church establishment*—*not accidental evils of an institution fundamentally good*. And this should, I think, be as evident as any possible instance of cause and effect. Consider, what is *the patronage* of the church? For one large portion, it is in the hands of the *state*, of the ministry—men most commonly ignorant and careless of religion, and only consulting secular and political interests. It is in the private hands of great lords and great squires of colleges and corporations. No small proportion of it is a matter of direct traffic in the market, like farms or any other commodity. So many thousand pounds for a “*cure of souls!*” Consider, again, that young men (a vast majority of those who enter the church) enter as on a profession or trade, and a thing which places them on a genteel footing in society. The church is the grand receptacle, too, for secondary branches of the upper sort of families. Many latterly are from the army and navy. Consider, that personal piety is not, nor by the nature of the institution can be, any

indispensable prerequisite. Who or what is there to require any such thing, or to judge of any such thing? The candidate passes through a few formalities, and it is done. And if the parishioners receive a man who is most evidently destitute of any such qualification—receive him as their instructor, consoler, and example—they have no remedy. They must be content; they can not remove him; and the church, and *even the evangelical clergy*, censure them if they presume to go to hear instead a pious and sensible preacher in a meeting-house in their neighborhood. We affirm, then, that this fearful mass and variety of evil consistently, and for the main part necessarily, result from the very nature of an established church; and are not accidental and separable; and that therefore the thing is radically and fundamentally bad, and pernicious to religion. If one hears talk of *correcting* it, making it a good thing by “reform”—one instantly says, “*How* correct it? Can you make kings, ministers of state, lord chancellors, to become pious and evangelical men? Can you *convert* the whole set of patrons—lords, baronets, squires, corporations? Can you work such a miracle in Oxford and Cambridge, that they shall fit out no young gents for the church, but such as give proofs of personal piety; or make the bishops such overseers that they shall allow none to go into the fold but such as bear the evident qualifications for the shepherds of the flock? Can you secure that, when advowsons are advertised for sale, none but religious men shall buy or bid for them?” Even if all this were not essentially and flagrantly impossible—if it *might* be brought about *some time*—I would say, “How long, meanwhile, are the people, myriads and millions of them, to be left to be misled in the most momentous of their interests by multitudes of authorized teachers, who teach them not the gospel? How many of these multitudes and myriads can we contentedly resign to live

and die under the delusion that a little middling morality (honesty chiefly), with the aid of the Christianizing sprinkle of water, the confirmation, and the talismanic sacrament at last, will carry them to heaven?" There is, besides, something strange and rather ludicrous in the notion of *correcting* what is itself appointed to be, and assumes to be, the *grand corrector*. There is a class of persons highly authorized, ordained, and officially appointed, to instruct, illuminate, and reform, the community; the community, wiser than their teachers, are to pity them, instruct them, get them reformed, and *then go to them* for "instruction and correction in righteousness!" A curious round-about process, even if it were practicable.

45. *Cavils at the tardy success of missions in India.*—Do they imagine that Mr. Carey, for instance, landed in India with the notion that all who came to worship the Ganges, or to burn their mothers or expose their children on its banks, one season, were to come there, the next, to be baptized? Or that the want of moonlight the half of each month would be supplied by the light of Hindoo temples, set on fire over the heads of their gods by the recent worshippers all through Hindostan?

46. *Indiscriminate eulogy over the dead, in prescribed service.*—It is obvious how powerful the depraving influence is likely to be on other men, who have not the information, the convictions, or the responsibility, implied and involved in the sacred profession, and who are perhaps half-vicious and half-skeptical already, if that influence is so strong as to make one most learned Christian divine, in a work expected and intended to go down to a future age, confidently dismiss to those abodes of the blessed which Christianity only assures its disciples, the person whom he has just confessed (we can not honest-

ly interpret the passage in any other sense) to be not a believer in the truth of that religion.

47. *In national establishments, subserviency often preferred to talents and piety.*—The archbishop could easily tolerate his clergy in being ignorant, careless, and profligate, provided they punctiliously observed all the prescribed ceremonies; while he could applaud himself for directing the vengeance of the star-chamber against the most learned, pious, and zealous preachers, that conscientiously declined some part of the ceremonial conformity. He chose rather that the people should not be instructed in religion at all, than be taught it by even the most excellent ministers, who could not acknowledge a particular gesture, or robe, or form of words, as an essential part of it. Is the established church infallible while its members are unable to agree as to the purport of its articles, or to the extent of the obligation under which they are to be subscribed, and are indefinitely divided and opposed in their opinions, forming a political compact, for a temporal advantage, of religious parties who are respectively schismatics in each other's estimation? If the infallibility of such a church, or indeed of any church, is an absurdity too gross for even this man to advance, where is the sense or decency of railing against sectaries? If the church may be wrong, the sectaries, or some of them, may be right; the authority for imputing error is perfectly equal on either side, and is no other than freedom of individual judgment, a freedom evidently not to be contravened but by demonstrated infallibility or the vilest tyranny.

48. *Romanism characterized.*—We can imagine a protestant falling into communication with a man like Fenelon—charmed with such piety and intelligence—carried by this feeling back into the popish church; no comprehensive view taken of the real character and operations of that church; no account

taken of its essential connexion with secularity and ambition—of its general hostility to true religion—of the prevailing worthlessness of its priesthood—of its wicked assumptions, maxims, and impostures—of its infernal persecutions ; and of all this being the natural result of its very constitution.

49. *Romanism has symbolized with heathenism.*—As the hostility of heathenism, in the direct endeavors to extirpate the Christian religion, became evidently hopeless, in the nations within the Roman empire, there was a grand change of the policy of evil ; and all manner of reprobate things, heathenism itself among them, rushed as by general conspiracy into treacherous conjunction with Christianity, retaining their own quality under the sanction of its name, and by a rapid process reducing it to surrender almost everything distinctive of it but that dishonored name : and all this under protection of the “ gross darkness covering the people.”

50. *In Romanism forms have superseded the spirit of Christianity.*—In this latency of the sacred authorities, withdrawn from all communication with the human understanding, there were retained still many of the terms and names belonging to religion. They remained, but they remained only such as they could be when the departing spirit of that religion was leaving them void of their import and solemnity, and so rendered applicable to purposes of deception and mischief. They were as holy vessels, in which the original contents might, as they were escaping, be clandestinely replaced by the most malignant preparations.

51. *Absurdity of pretended hereditary holiness.*—In some instances, an assumption of superior holiness has been made upon the ground of belonging to a certain division, or class, of mankind ; a class having its distinction in the circumstance of descent and nativity, or, in some artificial constitution of society

Thus the ancient Jews—in virtue merely of being Jews. Imagine the worst Jew comparing himself with Aristides, Phocion, or Socrates. The Bramins, in virtue of a pretended pre-eminently holy descent; an emanation from the head of their creating god. In popish countries, the numerous ecclesiastical class. Something of this even in protestant England, within a period not altogether gone beyond remembrance. In these instances there has been an assumption of holiness independently of individual personal character. Think of such things as here recounted! What an infamy to perverted human reason, that *anything* which might leave the individual evidently *bad*, in heart and life, could yet be taken as *constituting him the reverse of bad*, that is, *holy*! An absurdity parallel to transubstantiation.

52. *Formalism resorted to to ease conscience.*—A great many people of gayety, rank, and fashion, have occasionally a feeling that a little easy quantity of religion would be a good thing; because it is too true, after all, that we can not be staying in this world always, and when one goes out of it, why, there may be some hardish matters to settle in the other place. The prayer-book of a Sunday is a good deal to be sure toward making all safe, but then it is really so tiresome; for penance it is very well, but to say one likes it, one can not for the life of one. If there were some tolerable religious thing that one could read now and then without trouble, and think it about half as pleasant as a game of cards, it would be comfortable.

53. *Mummery and mimicry of Romanism.*—It would be the farthest thing in the world from his thoughts in beholding the pageants, the tricks, and grimaces, which would meet his view in a popish country, that these were exhibited as parts and appointments of Christianity. Some of them would appear a bad imitation of the opera, and others an

humble rival of the puppet-show; the only wonder being how any human creatures could perform such ridiculous mummeries and antics with such gravity of face.

54. *Interested apologists for Romanism.*—They will have it that popery, that infernal pest, is now become (if it ever was otherwise) a very tolerably good and harmless thing—no intolerance or malignity about it now—liberalized by the illuminated age—the popish priests the worthiest, most amiable, most useful of men. Nay, popery is just as good as any other religion, except some small preference for our “national establishment.” Nothing so impertinent, nothing so much to be deprecated and condemned, as the idle and mischievous fanaticism of attempting to convert papists to protestantism.

55. *Romanism unchangeable.*—Does any sensible man honestly doubt whether popery be intrinsically of the very same spirit that it ever was? Does any mortal doubt, whether if it were ever to regain an ascendancy of power, an uncontrolled dominion in this country, it would reveal the fiend, and again revel in persecution? When did ever the Romish church disavow, in the face of the world, any of its former principles, revoke any of its odious decrees, or even censure any of the execrable abominations, the burnings, the tortures, the massacres, the impostures, perpetrated under its authority?

56. *Ascendancy of Romanism impossible.*—What! popery attain to an over-awing power, in spite of the rapidly augmenting knowledge and intelligence of the people—the almost miraculous diffusion of the Bible—the spirit of license, the fearless discussion of all subjects—the extension of religion, and of dissent from all hierarchies—with the settled deep, and general prejudice against popery into the bargain—and the wealth, power, rank, and influence, nine tenth parts of them, on the side of protestantism?

CHAPTER VI.

VIEWS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE OBLIGATIONS AND
DUTIES OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. *Indifference to the great moral conflict waging in the world, unreasonable.*—Alas for the state of the senses, of the faculties of apprehension, in those minds that have so little cognizance of a most fearful reality which exists on every side, and presses upon them! How strange it is to see men in possession of a quick and vigilant faculty for perceiving everything that can approach them in hostility, except that nearest, deadliest, and mightiest enemy of all, moral evil! It is a spectacle of darker character than that which would have been presented by opposed armed parties or legions, gallantly maintaining battle on the yet uncovered space of ground, while the universal flood was rising.

2. *Apathy toward the formidable sway of moral evils.*—The friends of religion seem to have regarded those great maladies of the moral world, the delusions and abominations of paganism, with a sort of submissive awe, as if, almost, they had established a prescriptive right to the place they have held so long; or as if they were part of an unchangeable, uncontrollable, order of Nature, like the noxious climates of certain portions of the globe, and the liableness in others to the terrors of earthquake.

3. *Divine sovereignty falsely pleaded against obligation.*—If that Being whose power is almighty has willed to permit on earth the protracted existence in

opposition to him of this enormous evil, why are *we* called upon to vex and exhaust ourselves in a petty warfare against it?—why any more than to attempt the extinction of a volcano? If it were his will that it should be overthrown, we should soon, without having quitted our places and our quiet, in any offensive movement toward it, feel the earthquake of its mighty catastrophe; and if such is *not* his will, then we should be plainly putting ourselves in the predicament of willing something which he does not will, and making exertions which must infallibly prove abortive.

4. *Indolence operating to repress sense of obligations.*—Feelings of indolence, combined with ideas of the sovereignty of God, will form a state of mind prolific of such reflections as these: “Of what consequence can be the trivial efforts of such insignificant creatures, as co-operating or not with the energy of an Almighty Power? What signify, in a great process of Nature, some few raindrops or dewdrops the more or the less? What are we, to be talking, in strains of idle pomp, of converting the people of half a world? How reduced to contempt, how vanishing from perception, will be the effects of all our petty toils, when mightier powers shall come into action; as the footsteps of insects and birds are effaced and lost under the trample of elephants! Were it not even temerity to affect to take the course where the chariot of Omnipotence is to drive; as if we would intrude to share the achievements proper to a God, or fancy that something magnificent which he has to do, will not be done unless we are there?”

5. *Delay for more manifest tokens of duty.*—If there be still some cautious Christians who are reluctant to let it grow obsolete, we might ask them whether they have exactly figured in their minds in what manner the expected grand process is to begin, or what appearances they could accept as signs that

the period is come when their efforts would not be like a vain attempt to constrain the fulfilment of a Divine purpose before its appointed time. Are there to be extraordinary meteors, significantly passing eastward as they vanish? Are they to hear that the temples of Seeva are sunk suddenly in ruins at the stroke of thunder? Or, still more of prodigy, are all the chief statesmen, and mercantile men, and military men, especially concerned in the affairs of the East, to become with one accord inspired with a fervent zeal for the Christianizing of Asia, perhaps impelled literally to a spiritual crusade against Hindoo idolatry? Why should they not accept as the required signs, the circumstances that have attended thus far this Christian enterprise in India?

6. *Doctrine of decrees available to the highest Christian zeal and activity.*—As the principle of destruction is to be conveyed through the means of human agents, who so likely to be employed, they said, as we that are already on fire to destroy? Beyond all doubt, it is exactly here that we have our decreed and unalterable allotment. Exactly here it is, that our will and the Supreme Will coalesce to a purpose which defies all chance and all created power.

7. *Shrinking from the responsibility of the servants of God.*—The great contest against evil, in all its modes of invasion of this world (but our reference is chiefly to those requiring men's resistance in the religious capacity), has been a service assigned in every possible difference of circumstance and proportion; and some men's shares have involved a violence of exertion, or a weight of suffering, which we look upon with wonder and almost with terror. We shudder to think of mortals like ourselves having been brought into such fearful dilemmas between obedience and guilt. We shrink from placing ourselves but in imagination under such tests of fidelity to God and a good cause. The painful sympathy with those

agents and sufferers terminates in self-congratulation, that their allotment of duty has not been ours. The tacit sentiment is, I am very glad I can be a good man on less severe conditions. . . . There is delusion, if we are permitted to escape from the habitual sense of being, in the character of the servants of God, placed under the duty and necessity of an intense moral warfare, against powers of evil as real and palpable as ever were encountered in the field of battle. . . . Duties to be performed at the cost of suffering oppressive and unmitigated toil, pain, want, reproach, loss of liberty and even of life itself, duties imposing such a trial of fidelity as confessors and martyrs have sustained.

8. *Inefficient conception of spiritual relations.*—One has fancied sometimes what might have been the effect, in the selected instances, if the case had been that the Sovereign Creator had appointed but a few men, here and there one, to an immortal existence, or at least *declared* it only with respect to them. One can not help imagining them to feel, every hour, the impression of their sublime and awful predicament! But why—why is it less felt a sublime and solemn one, because the rest of our race are in it too? Does not each as a perfectly distinct *one*, stand in the whole magnitude of the concern, and the responsibility, and the danger, as absolutely if there were no other one? How is it less to him than if he thus stood alone? *Their* losing the happy interest of eternity will not be, that he shall not have lost it for himself. If he shall have lost it, he will feel that they have not lost it for him. He should therefore now feel that upon him is concentrated, even individually upon him, the entire importance of this chief concern. . . . But what a depth of depravity that can thus receive and swallow up such masses of alarming truth and fact and then be as if all this were nothing! How sad, that for men to be awfully wrong, and to be admon-

ished, and to be aware that they are so, should leave them still at ease!

9. *Strange apathy of the masses of mankind to religious truth.*—Think of the movements of the heart, in the inhabitants of a great city, during a single day, —loving, desiring, hoping, hating, fearing, regretting! What an infinity of emotions! What a stupendous measure of active vitality! Now consider—to these souls are presented among the other objects of interest, the things most important, desirable, and terrible in the universe; these things are placed before them, and pressed on them, as evidently and as closely and palpably, as reason and revelation can. We know what should be the effect of these. We can think what it should be on any individual whom the eye happens to fix upon, known or a stranger. We can look on the passing train, or the collected crowd, and think what it should be on each, and all. What a measure therefore this would be of a good spirit in such an assemblage! What *is* the effect on the far greater number? There are abundant indications to inform you *what* it is, or rather what it is not. And if the case be so, in an enlightened and Christian community, *what is* MAN! a rational and immortal being, involved in a relation the most perfect, vital, and inseparable, with all that is most important; the reality of that relation manifested to him, enforced upon him; and yet, he generally is as insensible to it almost as a statue of stone is to the objects surrounding it! But might not the compassion become mingled with indignation, when it should be observed how unlike an insensible figure he is toward other objects with which his relation is separable and transient? Nevertheless the great interest is still the same; bears all the importance of eternity upon it; remains as that sky above us, with its luminaries and its solemn and infinite depth, whether we look at it or not.

10. *Diversified appeals to religious emotion ineffectual.*—I fix an ardent gaze on Christianity, assuredly the last best gift of Heaven to men; on Jesus the agent and example of infinite love; on time as it passes away; on perfection as it shines beautiful as heaven, and alas! as remote; on my own beloved soul which I have injured, and on the unhappy multitude of souls around me; and I ask myself, Why do not my passions burn? Why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath, to lash my icy habits in pieces, to scourge me from indolence into fervid exertion, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust? At intervals I feel devotion and benevolence and a surpassing ardor; but when they are turned toward substantial laborious operations, they fly and leave me spiritless amid the iron labor.

11. *Special privileges improved.*—They should be regarded as cultivators regard the important weeks of the spring; as mariners regard the blowing of favorable winds; as merchants seize a transient and valuable opportunity of gain; as men, overlabored and almost overmatched in warfare, regard a strong reinforcement of fresh combatants.

12. *Temporary ebullition of benevolent feeling.*—The course of feeling resembles a listless stream of water, which, after being dashed into commotion, by a massive substance flung into it, or by its precipitation at a rapid, relapses, in the progress of a few fathoms and a few moments, into its former sluggishness of current.

13. *Appeals to gratitude.*—Consider! “Why am I not, at this hour, overwhelmed with distress, instead of these feelings of delight? I deserve to be so, and many of my fellow-mortals are so, who probably deserve it less. Is it not because God is exceedingly good to me? To constitute this state which I am now enjoying, how many cares and gifts of that beneficent Father—how many collective rays

of mercy from that open heaven! And does my heart absorb all, and reflect nothing? All this that tells me of the Supreme Benefactor, does it really but make me, or prove me, an atheist? In what manner—by what means—am I expecting ever to be reminded of God—*ever* to be drawn toward him, if his *goodness* has no such effect? If my heart has absolutely no will to send upward any of its gratifying emotions, as incense to him, what must be its condition? Is not this a reflection calculated instantly to chill all this delight? If, in these pleasurable emotions, there is nothing of a nature that admits of being sent up in grateful devotion, what estimate should I form of my pleasure, my happiness? Content! delighted! with a happiness which by its very nature estranges me from God!"

14. *Catholic charity evinced.*—Then we shall never actually see a disposition to discountenance a design on account of its originating with an alien sect, rather than to favor it for its intrinsic excellence; nor an eager insisting on points of precedence; nor a systematic practice of representing the operations of our own sect at their highest amount of ability and effect, and those of another at their lowest; nor the studied silence of vexed jealousy, which is thinking all the while of what it can not endure to name; nor that labored exaggeration of our magnitude and achievements, which most plainly tells *what* that jealousy is thinking of; nor that manner of hearing of marked and opportune advantages occurring to undertakings of another sect which betrays that a story of disasters would have been more welcome; nor underhand contrivances for assuming the envied merit of something which another sect has accomplished and never boasted of.

15. *Peculiar faults of moderate men.*—There is a class of good men naturally formed to be exceedingly sober, and cautious, and deliberate, and anxious

for all. . . . It may be conceded to these worthy men, that the advocates of missions have not always avoided extravagance. Especially when under the influence of a large assembly, supposed to be animated by interests which extend to the happiness of a world, they may have been excited to use a language which seemed to magnify these interests, and the projects in which they were embodied, at the expense of all other duties and concerns. . . . While, however, some concession is thus made to the cautious good men, who are more afraid of extravagance than of all other errors in designs for promoting religion, they must be told, that it would have been an ill-fate for Christianity in the world, if Christians of their temperament could always have held the ascendancy in projecting its operations. If they would for a moment put themselves, in imagination, in the case of being contemporary with Wicliff, or with Luther, and of being applied to by one of these daring spirits for advice, we may ask what counsel they can suppose themselves to have given. They can not but be instantly conscious that, though they had been protestants at heart, their disposition would have been to array and magnify the objections and dangers; to dwell in emphatic terms on the inveterate, all-comprehensive, and resistless dominion of the papal church, established in every soul and body of the people; on the vigilance and prompt malignity of the priests; and on the insignificance, as to any probable effect, of an obscure individual's efforts against an immense and marvellously well-organized system of imposture and iniquity. . . . If in those instances such counsel had been acted upon as they would have given, that zeal which was kindling and destined to lay a great part of the mightier Babylon in ashes, would have smouldered and expired in a languid, listless hope, that the Almighty would *sometime* create such a juncture of circumstances as should admit an

attempt at reformation without a culpable and useless temerity. . . . It is the very contrary spirit to this of restrictive parsimonious calculation that has been the most signally honored ; inasmuch as some of the most effectual and of the noblest services rendered to God in all time, have begun much more in the prompting of zeal to attempt something for him as it were at all hazards, than in rigorous estimates of the probable measure of effect.

16. *Vast results from apparently insignificant causes.*—The diminutive grows to the large, sparks flame into conflagrations, fountains originate mighty streams, and most inconsiderable moral agents are made the incipients whence trains of agencies and effects, proceeding on with continual accession, enlarge into effects of immense magnitude. . . . Much of the actual condition of our part of the world consists of a number of these grand results of enlarging trains of effects, progressive from the smallest beginnings, at various distances back in the past.

17. *Aggressive Christianity.*—There was once an age, when it had been most unfortunate to be a bad man ; the good ones were so formidably active and courageous. There was a class of men whose profession was martial benevolence. They lived but for the annihilation of wrongs ; to defend innocence ; to dwell in tempests, that goodness might dwell in peace ; to deliver the oppressed and captives, and to dash the tyrant down. Wo then to the castles of proud wickedness, to magicians, robbers, giants, dragons ; for the wandering heroes vowed their destruction. *This famous age is gone !* But in every age it has been deemed honorable to wage war against the mischievous things and mischievous beings that have infested the earth. “Gallant and heroic world !” we are inclined to exclaim, while we contemplate the mighty resistance made to invading armies, elements, or plagues ; or the spirited persecution that has been

carried on against robbers, pirates, monsters, serpents, and wild beasts. Yes, tigers, wolves, hyenas, have been pursued to death. The avenging spirit has hunted the timid thief, and even condescended to crush each poor reptile that has been deemed offensive. But—"The world of fools!" we cry, while we consider that SIN, the hideous parent of all evils, and for ever multiplying her brood of monsters over the world, is quietly, or even *complacently*, allowed here to inhabit and to ravage. Where are the heroes "who resist unto blood, *striving against sin*?" Should we weep or laugh at the foolishness of mankind, childishy spending their indignation and force against petty evils, and maintaining a friendly peace with the fell and mighty principle of Destruction? It is just as if men of professed courage, employed to go and find and destroy a tiger or a crocodile that has spread alarm or havoc, on being asked at their return, "Have you done the deed?" should reply, "We have not, indeed, destroyed the tiger or crocodile, but yet we have acted heroically; we have achieved something great: we have killed a wasp!" Or like men engaged to exterminate a den of murderers, who being asked at their return, "Have you accomplished the vengeance?" should say, "We have not destroyed any of the murderers; we did not deem it worth while to attempt it: but *we have lamed one of their dogs!*"

18. *Christian warfare*.—All Christian exhortation is in truth a summons to war.

19. *Self-devotion*.—I hold myself a sacrifice, a victim, consecrated and offered up on the great altar of the kingdom of Christ, as one of the human fruits of his kingdom, offered by him, the great High-Priest, to the God of all.

20. *Expression in an evening prayer*.—May we consider each night as the tomb of the departed day,

and, seriously leaning over it, read the inscription written by conscience, of its character and exit.

21. *A life not devoted to God profitless.*—Here am I with faculties and an infinite longing to be happy. Why am I not? I have an oppressive sense of evil from which there is no escape. I have intense dissatisfaction with myself and all things. Oh! it would not be so if I “dwelt in God and God in me.” My life, my time, each year, spite of all I do and enjoy, seem a gloomy scene of emptiness and vanity. It would not be felt so if it were for God that I lived—if my affections, my activities, my years, my months, were devoted to *him*. Without this, no year is good in its progress or its end. A high degree of this would have made our former years end nobly, would have made the last do so.

22. *The covetous man.*—He refuses, perhaps; or, much more probably, just saves the appearance and irksomeness of formally doing that, by contributing what is immeasurably below all fair proportion to his means; what is in such disproportion to them, that a general standard taken from it would reduce the contributions of very many other persons to a fraction of the smallest denomination of our money, and would very shortly break up the mechanism of human operation for prosecuting a generous design, throwing it directly on Providence and miracle.

23. *Unemployed resources of the church.*—With firebrands and torches put into their hands, can they be content to stand still and let them burn out, while the huge fabric inhabited by demon gods, and filled with pestilent abominations, spreads wide and towers aloft in pride and security before them?

24. *Denominational appellations should be repressed, to reveal, in proportionably greater prominence, the generic term Christian.*—This can not be done while there is so little of the vital element of religion in the world; because it is so shallow, these inconsiderable

points stand so prominent above the surface, and occasion obstruction and mischief; when the powerful spring-tide of piety and mind shall rise, these points will be swallowed up and disappear.

25. *The philosophy of prayer.*—Certain fact, that whenever a man prays aright, he forgets the philosophy of it, and feels as if his supplications *really would* make a difference in the determination and conduct of the Deity. In this spirit are the prayers recorded in the Bible.

26. *Prayer to Heaven the greatest resource of earth.*—If the people on the parched tracts along the Nile had a mighty engine for raising the water to irrigate, what would be thought of them for toiling with little earthen vessels, from which the element would almost evaporate while they were carrying it? Now look at our means for good. There is one pre-eminent; just that one that lies nearly unemployed! One image of this sort suggests another. The poor, superstitious multitudes of India believe that their adored river comes from heaven, and they are consistent. They pant to go to it; they have recourse to it with eager devotion; they purify their vessels with it, and themselves; they consider it a precious element in their food; they are happy to be carried to its banks when dying. Now we know that our grand resource of prayer is a blessed privilege granted from Heaven, of a peculiarly heavenly quality: where is our consistency, if we are indifferent and sparing in the use of it?

27. *Christian vigilance.*—It suggests the idea of a place where a man can hardly go to sleep, lest the plunderer or assassin be watching, or hovering near unseen; or of a place where the people can walk out no whither, without suspicion of some lurking danger or enemy not far off; and are to be constantly looking vigilantly and fearfully round; a place where they can not ascend an eminence, nor wander through

a sequestered valley, nor enter a blooming grove, nor even a garden of flowers, without having the image of the serpent, the wild beast, or a more deadly mischief in human shape, as vividly present to the imagination as the visible enemy is to the eye.

28. *Avoidance of temptation.*—Be careful that when unquestionable duty leads into the way of temptation, we stay not longer near the temptation than we are honestly about the duty. Beware of the kind of companionship that directly leads into temptation. But let no man be beguiled to think he is safe against temptation at the times when his only companion is himself. The whole tempting world may then come to him through the medium of the imagination. The great deep of his own evil heart may then be broken up. In this solitude may come that tempter that came to our Lord in the desert.

29. *Triumph of meekness.*—Confront improper conduct, not by *retaliation*, but *example*.

30. *Incipient temptation.*—It is in fatal connexion with the next ensuing, and yet conceals what is behind. Since temptation is sure to be early with its beginnings, so too should watching and praying; early in life; early in the day; early in every undertaking! What haste the man must make, that will be beforehand with temptation!

31. *Christian heroism.*—This soul either shall govern this body, or shall quit it.

32. *Conflicts of wisdom and virtue.*—One has sometimes continued in a foolish company, for the sake of maintaining a virtuous hostility in favor of wisdom; as the Jordan is said to force a current quite through the Dead sea.

33. *Conscience.*—There is not on earth a more capricious, accommodating, or abused thing, than CONSCIENCE. It would be very possible to exhibit a curious classification of consciences in genera and species. What copious matter for speculation among

the varieties of—lawyer's conscience—cleric conscience—lay conscience—lord's conscience—peasant's conscience—hermit's conscience—tradesman's conscience—philosopher's conscience—Christian's conscience—conscience of reason—conscience of faith—healthy man's conscience—sick man's conscience—ingenious conscience—simple conscience, &c., &c., &c., &c.

34. *Watch and pray.*—Watching without prayer were but an impious homage to ourselves. Prayer without watching were but an impious and also absurd homage to God.

35. *Rule of faith.*—A belief that in all things and at all events God is to be obeyed; that there is the essential distinction of holiness and sin in all conduct, both within the mind and in external action, and that sin is absolutely a dreadful evil; that *that* must not be done which must be repented of; that the future should predominate over the present.

36. *Influences unfriendly to piety.*—In addition to the grand fact of the depravity of the human heart, there are so many causes operating injuriously through the week on the characters of those who form a congregation, that a thoughtful man often feels a melancholy emotion amid his religious addresses, from the reflection that he is making a feeble effort against a powerful evil, a single effort against a combination of evils, a temporary and transient effort against evils of continual operation, and a purely intellectual effort against evils, many of which act on the senses. . . . The sight of so many bad examples, the communications of so many injurious acquaintances, and hearing and talking of what would be, if written, so many volumes of vanity and nonsense, the predominance of fashionable dissipation in one class, and of vulgarity in another.

37. *Religion submerged in the world.*—I still less and less like the wealthy part of your circle (H.'s).

It appears to me that the main body of principle is merged. As to religion, sir, they are in a religious diving-bell; religion is not circumambient, but a little is conveyed down into the worldly depth, where they breathe by a sort of artificial inlet—a tube.

38. *Isolated virtues repressed by uncongenial associations.*—Each good motive must, to be of any essential value, be part of a whole general system of such motives. There must be a vital circulation of the holy principles through the whole soul. The single part can not by itself have pulsation, and warmth, and life. The one actuating principle will be surrounded by a multitude of others; and if it be a holy one, and they are hostile, it will soon be overwhelmed by them and perish.

39. *Reputation for virtue necessary to confidence.*—But no public man can have such a reputation without having substantially such a character. And by a law, as deep in human nature as any of its principles of distinction between good and evil, it is impossible to give respect or confidence to a man who habitually disregards some of the primary ordinances of morality. . . . No man, even of the highest talents, can ever acquire, or at least retain, much influence on the public mind in the character of remonstrant and reformer, without the reality, or at any rate the invulnerable reputation, of virtue, in the comprehensive sense of the word, as comprising every kind of morality prescribed by the highest moral code acknowledged in a Christian nation.

40. *Efficacy of religious habits.*—He will trace all the progress of this his better life, with grateful acknowledgment to the sacred power which has advanced him to a decisiveness of religious habit that seems to stamp eternity on his character. In the greater majority of things, habit is a greater plague than ever afflicted Egypt; in religious character, it is a grand felicity. The devout man exults in the in-

dications of his being fixed and irretrievable. He feels this confirmed habit as the grasp of the hand of God, which will never let him go. From this advanced state he looks with firmness and joy on futurity, and says, "I carry the eternal mark upon me that I belong to God; I am free of the universe; and I am ready to go to any world to which he shall please to transmit me, certain that everywhere, in height or depth, he will acknowledge me for ever."

41. *Attractiveness of simple and unaffected piety.*—It would be unjust not to observe that some Christians, of a subordinate intellectual order, are distinguished by such an unassuming simplicity, by so much refinement of conscience, and by a piety so fervent and even exalted, that it would imply a very perverted state of mind in a cultivated man, if these examples did not operate, notwithstanding the confined scope of their ideas, to attract him toward the faith which renders them so happy and excellent, rather than to repel him from it.

42. *Slow progress in piety.*—How strange and mortifying that progress in personal religion is so difficult! that it should not be the natural, earnest, and even impetuous *tendency* of an immortal spirit, summoned to the prosecution of immortal interests!

43. *The Savior, though unseen, loved.*—Think of all the affection of human hearts that has been given to the Savior of the world, since he withdrew his visible presence from it! He has appeared to no eye of man since the apostles; but millions have loved him with a fervency which nothing could extinguish, in life or death. Think of the great "army" of those who have suffered death for this love, and have cherished it in death! A mightier number still would have died for it, and with it, if summoned to do so. Think of all those who, in the excitement and inspiration of this love, have indefatigably labored to promote the glory of its great object!—and the innumer-

able multitude of those who, though less prominently distinguished, have felt this sacred sentiment living in the soul, as the principle of its best life, and the source of all its immortal hopes! This is a splendid fact in the history of our race, a glorious exception to the vast and fatal expenditure of human affection on unworthy and merely visible things. So grand a tribute of the soul has been redeemed to be given to the Redeemer, though an object unseen! Our conceptions are not reduced and confined down to a precise image of human personality—a particular, individual, graphical form, which would be always present to the mind's eye, in every meditation on the exalted Redeemer. . . . Thus we can with somewhat the more facility give our thoughts an unlimited enlargement in contemplating his sublime character and nature. Thus also we are left at greater freedom in the effort to form some grand though glimmering idea of him as possessing a glorious body, assumed after his victory over death. Our freedom of thought is the more entire for arraying the exalted Mediator in every glory which speculation, imagination, devotion, can combine, to shadow forth the magnificence of such an adored object. . . . The manner in which he appears in the visions of Daniel; the transfiguration; in his manifestation to Paul; and the transcendent images in the visions of John—in endeavoring to form a sublime conception of him, can add, and accumulate upon the idea, all the glory that has arisen to him from the progress of his cause in the world ever since. So many mighty interpositions; conquests gained; strongholds of darkness demolished; such a multitude of sinful immortal spirits redeemed—devoted to him on earth, and now triumphing with him in heaven: all this is become an added radiance around the idea of HIM!

44. *Desire of association.*—A reflection that never occurs without the bitterest pain: one longs for affec-

tion, for an object to love devotedly, for an interesting friend to associate and commune with ; meanwhile THE DEITY offers his friendship and communion, and is refused, or forgotten !! There are, too, the sages of all ages—there is Moses, Daniel, Elijah ; and you complain of *want of society* !!!

45. *God dwells in his people.*—God has an all-pervading power ; can interpose, as it were, his very essence through the being of his creatures ; can cause himself to be apprehended and felt as absolutely in the soul—such an intercommunion as is, by the nature of things, impossible between created beings. And thus the interior, central loneliness, the solitude of the soul, is banished by a perfectly intimate presence, which imparts the most affecting sense of society—a society, a communion, which imparts life and joy, and may continue in perpetuity. To men completely immersed in the world, this might appear a very abstracted and enthusiastic notion of felicity ; but to those who have, in any measure, attained it, the idea of its loss would give the most emphatic sense of the expression,—“ Without God in the world !”

46. *The rewards of piety progressively developed.*—Any train of serious thoughts and exercises in the mind, having a reference to practical good, and beginning on one suggestion, one conviction, but at last attaining the ultimate effect or result ; . . . a course of inquiry concerning any important truth ; the beginning is ignorance, doubt, anxiety, dread of the labor, misty and dubious twilight, and daybreak ; but the end, knowledge, certainty, satisfaction, &c. ; . . . any practical undertaking for social good, as the present one ; . . . Christian profession ; examples of the contrary are justly accounted among the most melancholy sights on earth ; . . . life itself : in the beginning are the charms of infancy ; but the end may be far better ; as in the case of a withered, trem-

pling, sinking old man, whose soul is ripe for eternity; and it should be so, and must be so, or life is an awful calamity! The fruit is better than the blossom, the reaping is better than the sowing, the enjoyment better than the reaping; the second stage of a journey to the happy home is better than the first; the home itself than all; the victory is better than the march and the battle; the reward is better than the course of service; the ending in the highest improvement of means is better than being put at first in possession of them.

CHAPTER VII.

OF MAN—THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER—ITS SOURCES AND DIVERSITIES—POPULAR IGNORANCE, AND THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE.

1. *On the greatness of man.*—Mankind viewed collectively, as an assemblage of beings, presents to contemplation an object of astonishing magnitude. It has spread over this wide world to essay its powers against every obstacle, and every element; and to plant in every region its virtues and its vices. As we pass along the plains, we perceive them marked by the labors, the paths, or the habitations of man. Proceeding forward across rivers, or through woods, or over mountains, we still find man in possession on the other side. Each valley that opens, and each hill that rises before us, presents a repetition of human abodes, contrivances, and appropriations; for each house, and garden, and field (in some places almost each tree), reminds us that there is a person somewhere who is proud to think and say, "This is mine."

All the beautiful and rugged varieties of earth, from the regions of snow to those of burning sand, have been pervaded by man. If we sail to countries beyond the seas, we find him still, though he may disclaim our language, our manners, and our color. And if we discover lands where he is not, we presently quit them, as if the Creator too were a stranger there. Here and there indeed a desert retreat is inhabited by an ascetic, whom the solemnity of solitude

has drawn thither; or by a felon, whom guilt has driven thither.

While he extends himself thus over the world, behold this collective grandeur. It appears prominent in great cities built by his own hands; it is seen in structures that look like temples erected to time, which promise by their strength to await the latest years of his continuance with men; and seem to plead by their magnificence against the decree which dooms them to perish when he shall abandon them; it is seen in wide empires, and in armies, which may be called the talons of imperial power—to give security to happiness where that power is just, but for cruel ravage where it is tyrannical; it is displayed in fleets; in engines which operate as if informed with a portion of the actuating power of his own mind; in the various productions of beauty; the discoveries of science; in subjected elements, and a cultivated globe. The sentiment with which we contemplate this scene is greatly augmented when imagination bears her flaming torch into the enormous shade which overspreads the past, and passes over the whole succession of human existence, with all its attendant prodigies. When we have made the addition for futurity, of supposing the human race extensively enlightened, apprized of their dignity and power, and combined in a far stricter union, till the vast ocean of mind prevail over all its accustomed boundaries, and sweep away many of the evils which oppress the world—we may pause awhile and indulge our amazement. Such an aggregate view of the multitude, achievements, and powers of man, is grand. It has the air of a general and endless triumph.

2. *Great men.*—A character stands before us of colossal stature, who presents the lineaments and the powers of man in magnitude—a magnitude which conceals a numerous crowd of mankind undistinguished behind him. His aspect declares that he knows

he belongs to himself, and that he possesses himself; while the rest seem only to belong as appendages to the situation. He brings from the Creator a commission far more ample than those of other men; and instead of having to learn with tedious application, the nature and circumstances of the world to which he is sent, it appears as if he had been taught them all before he came. Guided by intuitive principles and rule, he enters on the stage of action with the intelligent confidence of one who has accomplished himself by frequenting it long. And whatever still undiscovered means and materials are requisite to his achievements, some kind of internal revelation informs him where they are, though latent in earth, water, air, or fire; and empowers him quickly to detect them and draw them thence. We observe that for many things he has regards and names different from the common; for some objects generally esteemed great, excite no emotion in him, or none but contempt. He calls suffering, discipline; sacrifices, emolument; and what are usually deemed insuperable obstacles, he names impediments, and casts them out of the way, or vaults over them. His mind seems a focus which concentrates into one ardent beam the languid lights and fires of ten thousand surrounding minds. It might be expected that a few such extraordinary specimens of human nature, scattered here and there, would have a wonderful influence on the rest of men. One might expect to see a most fervid emulation kindled wide, indolence and folly discarded, and trifles falling to the ground from all hands. It should seem natural to make the reflection, "Either these are more than men, or we are less." . . . A sublime image of perfection is constantly before them at a distance, though a gloomy cloud may sometimes interpose, to obscure or for a moment hide it. They are like night-adventurers, who, having caught a view of a noble mansion of a difficult eminence, resolve to reach

it, while, together with the path that conducts thither, it is alternately revealed by flashes of lightning, and shrouded by the returning darkness. They are grieved almost to madness when they feel their spirits failing in a trial, or find their powers retreating from some noble but arduous attempt. Grand objects in the natural world affect them powerfully, and their images are adopted as a kind of scenery for the interior apartment of the mind, to assist it to form great thoughts. But the interest they feel in greatness when it shines in their brother man, is of force to fire their utmost enthusiasm, at the view of exalted heroism, displayed in enterprise, in suffering, or even in retirement, and to melt them into tears at the recital of an act of godlike generosity. For a while they almost lament that they could not be there, and themselves the actors, though ages have passed since. In the reveries into which they sometimes wander, they are apt to personate some exalted character in some interesting situation; or more frequently to fancy themselves such characters, and create situations of their own; and when they return from visionary roving, to the serious ground of reason, regretting the inaction of the past, they solemnly resolve the most strenuous exertions to surpass, beyond measure, all around them, and their present selves.

3. *Indifference of the masses to the distinctions of genius.*—Is it true that the human nature was cast to carry forward the great series of existence, from the inferior to the higher ranks of being, by a gradation which *such* parts were necessary to complete? or is it a solemn decree of fate that the aggregate amount of human dignity *must* not exceed a certain measure, and therefore the splendid intellectual possessions of individuals are of the nature of conquests, made at the expense of part of their brethren, who must be degraded, to counterbalance these glories? As to the very numerous class who hold the degree

of mediocrity, tell them of a man who has performed a noble act of justice or benevolence in spite of the most powerful temptations to the contrary; tell them of another who has suffered tortures and death for virtue's sake—and suffered them without a groan; describe to them heroes who have possessed their souls unappalled when environed by dangers, and horrors, and death, and fire; or talk to them of a sublime genius, that transcending Milton's powerful agents, who constructed a road from the infernal kingdom to this unfortunate world, has carried a path from this world among the stars, and generally the emotion kindled would be so languid, that the smallest trifle will extinguish it, and turn attention another way. They are content to acknowledge that such characters are much superior to them, just as they would acknowledge that a tree is taller, and then think no more about them. They resemble some lazy and incurious peasants inhabiting the neighborhood of a high mountain, from the top of which they *have heard* that vast plains, and cities, and ocean, can be seen, but never thought it worth the labor to ascend for such a view.

4. *The myriad influences combining to form character.*—Through this lengthened, and, if the number could be told, stupendous multiplicity of things, you have advanced, while all their heterogeneous myriads have darted influences upon you, each one of them having some definable tendency. A traveller round the globe would not meet a greater variety of seasons, prospects, and winds, than you might have recorded of the circumstances affecting the progress of your character, in your moral journey. You could not wish to have drawn to yourself the agency of a vaster diversity of causes; you could not wish, on the supposition that you had gained advantage from all these, to wear the spoils of a greater number of regions. The formation of the character from so

many materials reminds one of that mighty appropriating attraction, which, on the hypothesis that the resurrection should reassemble the same particles which composed the body before, must draw them from dust, and trees, and animals, from ocean, and winds.

5. *Comparatively trifling incidents of early life derive vast importance from prospective bearing upon character and destiny.*—The first rude settlement of Romulus would have been an insignificant circumstance, and might justly have sunk into oblivion, if Rome had not at length commanded the world. The little rill, near the source of one of the great American rivers, is an interesting object to the traveller, who is apprized, as he steps across it, or walks a few miles along its bank, that this is the stream which runs so far, and which gradually swells into so immense a flood. So, while I anticipate the endless progress of life, and wonder through what unknown scenes it is to take its course, its past years lose that character of vanity which would seem to belong to a train of fleeting perishing moments, and I see them assuming the dignity of a commencing eternity.

6. *Unsuspected importance of early life.*—When we go back to it in thought, and endeavor to recal the interests which animate it, they will not come. We are like a man returning, after the absence of many years, to visit the embowered cottage where he passed the morning of his life, and finding only a relic of its ruins.

But many of the propensities which still continue, probably originated then: and our not being able to explore them up to those remote sources renders a *complete* investigation of our moral and intellectual characters for ever impossible. How little, in those years, we are aware, when we met with the incident, or heard the conversation, or saw the spectacle or felt the emotion, which were the first causes of

some of the chief permanent tendencies of future life, how much and how vainly we might, long afterward, wish to ascertain the origin of those tendencies.

7. *Education of life.*—We may regard our past life as a continued though irregular course of education; and the discipline has consisted of instruction, companionship, reading, and the diversified influences of the world. . . . I am highly pleased to feel that I am acquiring something of that *military discipline of thought* and action, which I suppose will be indispensable through the whole of life.

8. *Elements of character traced to their sources along the retrospect of life.*—I yet can not but perceive that the *immediate* causes of the greater portion of the prominent *actual* character of human beings are to be found in those moral elements through which they pass. And if one might be pardoned for putting in words, so fanciful an idea as that of its being possible for a man to live back again to his infancy, through all the scenes of his life, and to give back from his mind and character, at each time and circumstance, as he repassed it, exactly that which he took from it when he was there before, it would be most curious to see the fragments and *exuviae* of the moral man lying here and there along the retrograde path, and to find what he was in the beginning of this train of modifications and acquisitions.

9. *Absorbing power of a man of genius.*—His mind seems a focus which concentrates into one ardent beam the languid lights and fires of ten thousand surrounding minds.

10. *States of mind and progress of character are the life, and not a series of facts and dates.*—It is often by a detail of this subordinate economy of life, that the works of fiction, the narratives of age, the journals of travellers, and even grave biographical accounts, are made so unreasonably long. As well might a chronicle of the coats that a man has worn,

with the color and date of each, be called his life, for any important uses of relating its history. As well might a man of whom I inquire the dimensions, the internal divisions, and the use, of some remarkable building, begin to tell me how much wood was employed in the scaffolding, where the mortar was prepared, or how often it rained while the work was proceeding.

11. *The immortality of character.*—We must be prepared to surrender to the inevitable approaches of mortality, and the more earnestly aspire to be ready to surrender the whole of what can die. How striking to realize the idea, that at a time, at the utmost comparatively not distant, this entire material frame, with all that in it is now in order and in disorder, will be under ground and dissolving into dust! I often image to myself the fact, as it will one day be, when, at the same time, all *above* ground will continue to be as we see it now, and are sharers of its life and activity—a profusion of blooming youth, amusement, business, infinitely various interests and pursuits, and (as now) little thought of death. *So far* the anticipated, inevitable, and prodigious change, can not but have a dreary aspect. But there is the *never-dying principle*, the spiritual agent, the real and imperishable being; *that* will be set free, and rise in sublime independence of dust, and all that can be turned to dust: let us take care of that, or rather commit it to God to be taken care of, and then never mind the insignificant loss which we are doomed to incur, of a piece of organized clay.

12. *Want of self-confidence an element of weakness of character.*—Let them be brought into the necessity of adopting actual measures in an untried proceeding, where, unassisted by any previous example or practice, they are reduced to depend on the resources of pure judgment alone, and you will see, in many cases, this confidence of opinion vanish away. The

mind seems all at once placed in a misty vacuity, where it reaches round on all sides, but can find nothing to take hold of. Or if not lost in vacuity, it is overwhelmed by confusion; and feels as if its faculties were annihilated as soon as it begins to think of schemes and calculations among the possibilities, chances, and hazards, which overspread a wide, untrodden field; and this conscious imbecility becomes severe distress, when it is believed that consequences, of serious or unknown good or evil, are depending on the decisions which are to be formed amid so much uncertainty. The thought painfully recurs at each step and turn—"I may be right, but it is more probable I am wrong."

13. *Obstinacy of character not decision.*—It may produce that false and contemptible kind of decision which we term *obstinacy*; a stubbornness of temper, which can assign no reasons but mere will, for a constancy which acts in the nature of dead weight rather than of strength; resembling less the reaction of a powerful spring, than the gravitation of a big stone.

14. *Energy and force of character augmented by vigorous physical constitution.*—It would be for physiologists to explain, if it were explicable, the *manner* in which corporeal organization affects the mind; I only assume it as a fact that there is in the material construction of some persons, much more than of others, some quality which augments, if it does not create, both the stability of their resolution and the energy of their active tendencies. There is something that, like the ligatures which one class of the Olympic combatants bound on their hands and wrists, braces round, if I may so describe it, and compresses the powers of the mind, giving them a steady, forcible spring and reaction, which they would presently lose if they could be transferred into a constitution of soft, yielding, treacherous debility. The action

of strong character seems to demand something firm in its corporeal basis, as massive engines require, for their weight and for their working, to be fixed on a solid foundation.

15. *A strenuous will an element of decided character.*—Another essential principle of the character is, a total incapability of surrendering to indifference or delay the serious determinations of the mind. A strenuous *will* must accompany the conclusions of thought, and constantly incite the utmost efforts for their practical accomplishment. The intellect must be invested, if I may so describe it, with a glowing atmosphere of passion, under the influence of which the cold dictates of reason take fire, and spring into active powers.

16. *Religious faith the highest element of moral courage.*—The last decisive energy of a rational courage, which confides in the Supreme Power, is very sublime. It makes a man, who intrepidly dares everything that can oppose or attack him within the whole sphere of mortality; who would retain his purpose unshaken amid the ruins of the world; who will still press toward his object while death is impending over him. It was in the true elevation of this character that Luther, when cited to appear at the diet of Worms, under a very questionable assurance of safety from high authority, said to his friends, who conjured him not to go, and justly brought the example of John Huss, who, in a similar situation, and with the same pledge of protection, had notwithstanding been burnt alive, "I am called in the name of God to go, and I would go, though I were certain to meet as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the houses!"—A reader of the Bible will not forget Daniel, braving in calm devotion the decree which virtually consigned him to the den of lions; or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, saying to the tyrant,

"We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," when the furnace was in sight.

17. *I know no mortification so severe* as that which accompanies the evinced inefficacy, in one's own conduct, of a virtuous conviction so decisive that it can receive no additional cogency from the resources of either the judgment or the heart.

18. *Query: whether the generality of minds, the common order, could be cultivated into accuracy and discrimination of general thought?*—No; they might be made accurate in a particular department, depending on facts—accurate mechanics, tradesmen, grammarians, &c.; but not as thinkers on the wide general field of truth and sentiment. "This is very unfortunate."—"No, madam, all is appointed by the Deity; and if more geniuses had been needful, they would have been forthcoming."

19. *Commonplace character.*—As to the crowd of those who are faithfully stamped, like bank-notes, with the same marks, with the difference only of being worth more guineas or fewer, they are mere particles of a class, mere pieces and bits of the great vulgar or the small; *they* need not write their history, it may be found in the newspaper chronicle, or the gossip's or the sexton's narrative.

20. *Those averse to inquiry.*—They resemble some lazy and incurious peasants inhabiting the neighborhood of a high mountain, from the top of which they *have heard* that vast plains, and cities, and ocean, can be seen, but never thought it worth the labor to ascend for such a view.

21. *Aversion to reflection.*—Is it not too evident, that people's attention and thought mainly go *outward*? insomuch that retiring *inward* would be like retreating into a narrow, dark, desolate, comfortless apartment of a house, or into a prison or a cavern. But there can be no effective self-examination without a resolute and often-repeated effort to retire in-

ward, and stay a while, and pointedly inspect what is there. You can imagine that often a man has been frightened out of his soul to take refuge in the apparently better quality of his conduct. Any impulse the examiner feels to do so, should warn him to stay a while longer there—in the interior. It is especially there that the great substance lies of what is wrong, or right, as toward God.

22. *Inattention to the complex action and diversified experience of the mind.*—Men carry their minds as they carry their watches, content to be ignorant of the mechanism of their movements, and satisfied with attending to the little exterior circle of things, to which the passions, like indexes, are pointing.

23. *Learned in all science and history but that of oneself.*—He may have lived almost an age, and traversed a continent, minutely examining its curiosities, and interpreting the half-obliterated characters on its monuments, unconscious the while of a process operating on his own mind, to impress or to erase characteristics of much more importance to him than all the figured brass or marble that Europe contains. After having explored many a cavern, or dark, ruinous avenue, he may have left undetected a darker recess in his character. He may have conversed with many people, in different languages, on numberless subjects; but, having neglected those conversations with himself by which his whole moral being should have been kept continually disclosed to his view, he is better qualified perhaps to describe the intrigues of a foreign court, or the progress of a foreign trade; to represent the manners of the Italians or the Turks; to narrate the proceedings of the Jesuits, or the adventures of the gipsies; than to write the history of his own mind.

24. *Waste of thoughts.*—The sun may waste an immense proportion of his beams—the clouds of their showers—but *these* can be spared; there is an infi-

nite opulence still, for all the indispensable purposes of nature. It is not so with our thinking faculty. The most saving use of our thinking power will but imperfectly suffice for the knowledge, sound judgment, and wisdom, which are so very necessary for us. It is wretched, then, that this precious thing, the activity of our thinking spirit, should run to utter waste. It is as if the fine element, GAS, by means of which your city is now lighted, should be suffered to expire into the air without being kindled into light. . . . As when, in some regions, a swarm of locusts fills the air, so as to exclude the sun, at once intercepting the light of heaven, and devouring what it should shine on. Thus by ill-regulated thought we are defrauded of what is the supreme value of thought. We amuse ourselves with the flying chaff, careless of the precious grain. . . . What will ten thousand of these trifling, volatile thoughts come to, for explaining any subject, disentangling any perplexity, rectifying any false notion, enforcing any argument, maintaining any truth? It is in vain that the man glances in recollection and research through all the idle crowd of his ideas, for anything to avail him. It were like bringing straws, and leaves, and feathers, to meet an account where silver and gold are required. . . . Often, on looking back on a day or a week, we can mark out large portions in which life was of no use—in other words, was nothing worth—because the mind did nothing, and gained nothing; notwithstanding that the while the pulsation of the blood and all the vital functions of the *animal* life went on; notwithstanding that the dial noted the rapid hours, the sun rose and set, the grand volume of truth was expanded before us, and the great operations of nature held their uncontrollable course. . . . It was impossible not to regret that the power most made for action and advance, the power apparently adapted to run a race with any orb in the sky, should be so im-

mentally left behind. And it was difficult to avoid the folly of wishing that the soul, too, were under some grand law of necessitated exertion and inevitable improvement.

I remember when once, many years ago, musing in reflective indolence, observing the vigorous vegetation of some shrubs and plants in spring, I wished that the powers of the mind too could not help growing in the same spontaneous manner. But this vain wish instantly gave place to the recollected sober conviction, that there is a simple and practicable process which would as certainly be followed by the high improvements of reason, as the vegetable luxury follows the genial warmth and showers of spring. If all our wishes for important acquirements had become *efforts*, my friend! if all those spaces of time, that have been left free from the claims of other employment, had been spent in such a determined exercise of our faculties, as we recollect to have sustained at a few particular seasons, how much more correct, acute, ample, and rich, they would at this time have been!

25. *Mortifying review of the progress of character.*—Many years are now gone since the conduct and the responsibility of my own education devolved entirely on myself. It is not necessary to review these years in order to estimate the manner in which this momentous charge has been executed. The present state of my mind and character supplies a mortifying excess of proof, that the interesting work has been conducted ill.

26. *Observation available to the formation of character.*—A great defect in the intellectual economy of my life; I have made many observations on men and things, but have let these observations remain in *insulated bits*, and have seldom referred them to any general principles of truth, or of the philosophy of the human mind. Such observations have a particular use when applied to circumstances, but

not the general use of perfecting system, or illustrating theory. *Qy.* Has this defect been owing to indolence or incapacity?

27. *Amplitude and symmetry of character.*—*Quantity of existence* may perhaps be a proper phrase for that, the less or more of which causes the less or more of our interest in the individuals around us. The person who gives us most the idea of ample being, interests us the most. Something certainly depends on the *modification* of this being, and something on its comprising *each of the parts* requisite to *completeness*; but still perhaps the most depends on its *quantity*. This is the principle of my attachment to Y. I do not exactly like the *modification*, and there seems a defect of one article or two to *entireness*; but I am gratified by the ample measure. Z., has both the ample quantity of being, and the charming modification, and the entire number of parts; Z., is therefore the most interesting individual I know.

28. *Aversion to self-knowledge.*—In a numerous assembly or in the crowd of a city, it is presumed, by any one that happens to think of it, that very few, among the numbers round him, have a deep, comprehensive, well-rectified, steady estimate of themselves—a true insight. The presumption, or surmise, is understood to go even as far as this; that suppose any number of persons, acquainted with one another—the judgments they form of one another would, in the whole account, be nearer the truth than those which they entertain of their own selves, notwithstanding the great advantage men have for knowing themselves better than others can. . . . There may be a reluctance to making a rigorous scrutiny, from fear, and thus men remain in ignorance. There may be some apprehension of finding the state of the case less satisfactory than the man is allowing himself to assume it. This may seem like expressing an inconsistency—that a man will not know what he

does know. But it is too real and common a case; intimations of something not right are unwillingly perceived; apprehension of what there may be beneath is felt; a man would rather not be sure of the whole truth; would wilfully hope for the best, and so pass off from the doubtful subject, afraid to go too far inward.

But here is a most remarkable and strange spectacle! A soul afraid of itself! afraid of being deeply intimate with itself; of knowing itself; of seeing itself, having had some glimpses of itself, afraid to meet its own full visage—afraid to stay with itself, alone, still, and attentive—afraid of intimate communication, lest the soul should speak out from its inmost recesses! All the while, what it is afraid of is its own very self, from which it is every where and for ever inseparable!

29. *Escape from reflection.*—It is a bad sign when we see a person in this state or feeling just merely anxious and endeavoring to escape from it; when there is a horror of solitude; a recourse to anything that will help to banish reflection; such as change of place; making excursions; contriving visits and parties; endeavoring to force the spirits up to the pitch of lively society; even trying amusements, when really little in the mood for amusement. This is a wretched and self-defrauding management. . . . Have you yet come to a determinate judgment on the state of your mind, in reference to its greatest interests? If not, is a season of unusually grave feeling, of all times the wrong one for such a purpose? Have you yet come to a full consent of the soul to take death and eternity into the system of your interests; into an intimate combination with all that you are wishing, projecting, and pursuing? . . . If there be anything dubious as to this great matter, are you impatient to hasten away into a state of feeling in which

you may slumber over such a question, and such a doubt?

30. *Indisposition of mankind to think*, makes the world a vast dormitory of souls. The heaven-appointed destiny under which they are placed, seems to protect them from reflection; there is an *opium sky* stretched over all the world, which continually rains soporifics.

31. *Thoughts the mirror of the heart*.—Just left to themselves, to arise and act spontaneously, they would express the very state of the soul, its inclinations, perversions, ignorance, or any better quality there may be in it. So that if the involuntary thoughts could but strike against a mirror, a man might see his mental image.

32. *Fundamental cure of evil thoughts*.—If there were a spot of marshy ground, which exhaled offensive vapors, it would be ridiculous to think of expedients to be used in the air above it, fumigations, or any such thing; the ground itself must be drained and reclaimed. As to the correction of the mental vice in question, how evident it is that it is not to be a thing to operate solely on the thoughts themselves, rejecting, repelling, substituting, &c., but to operate primarily on *that* in the mind which causes their prevalence. The passions and affections are grand sources of thoughts—they therefore are to be in a rectified state not tending to produce vain thoughts.

33. *Gradation and fruits of wicked thoughts*.—Thus vain thoughts, compared with vicious, polluted thoughts, malignant thoughts, and blasphemous thoughts. O, the depth to which the investigation and the censure may descend!

We can easily picture to our minds some large neglected mansion in a foreign wilderness; the upper apartments in possession of swarms of disgusting insects; the lower ones the haunt of savage beasts; but the lowest, the subterraneous one, the retreat

of serpents, and every loathsome living form of the most deadly venom. . . . Never stagnant pool was more prolific of flies, nor the swarm about it more wild and worthless! . . . Have they given and left me anything worth having? what? Have they made me any wiser? wherein? What portion of previous ignorance have they cleared away? In what point is my judgment rectified? What good purpose have they fixed or forwarded? What one thing that was wrong has been corrected? or even more clearly seen how to be corrected? Is it, can it be the fact, that all that succession passed me but as the lights and shadows of an April day? or as the insects that have flown past me in the air? While ten thousand or a hundred thousand ideas have passed my mind, might I really as well have had none? . . . Any grains of gold-dust deposited by the stream that has carried down so many millions of particles of mud?

34. *Religion the noblest pursuit.*—How could you estimate so meanly your mind with all its capacities, as to feel no regret that an endless series of trifles should seize, and occupy as their right, all your thoughts, and deny them both the liberty and the ambition of going on to the greatest object? How, while called to the contemplations which absorb the spirits of Heaven, could you be so patient of the task of counting the flies of a summer's day?

35. *Vices flourishing in old age.*—An old stump of an oak, with a few young shoots on its almost bare top. Analogy: youthful follies growing on old age.

36. *Splendid talents without virtuous philanthropy.*—A still pool amid a most barren heath, shining resplendently in the morning sunshine. Analogy: talents accompanied with moral barrenness, that is, indolence or depravity.

37. *Limited acquirements from unlimited means of improvement.*—What an astonishing mass of *pabulum*

is consumed to sustain an individual human being ! How much nourishment I have consumed by eating and drinking ; how much air by breathing ; how much of the element of affection my *heart* has claimed, and has sometimes lived in luxury, and sometimes starved ! Above all ! what an infinite sum of those instructions which are to feed the moral and intellectual man, have I consumed, and how poor the consequence ! What a despicable, dwarfish growth I exhibit to myself and to God at this hour !

Yes, how much it takes in this last respect, to grow how little ! Millions of valuable thoughts I suppose have passed through my mind. How often my conscience has admonished me ! How many thousands of pious resolutions ! How all nature has preached to me ! How day and night, and solitude and the social scenes, and books and the bible, the gravity of sermons and the flippancy of fools, life and death, the ancient world and the modern, sea and land, and the omnipresent God ! have all concurred to instruct me ! and behold the miserable result of all !! I wonder if the measure of effect be a ten thousandth part of the bulk, to call it so, of this vast combination of causes. How far is this strange proportion between moral effects and their causes necessary in *simple* nature (analogically with the proportion between cause and consequence in *physical pabulum*), and how far is it the indication and the consequence of nature being *depraved* ? However this may be, the enormous fact of the inefficacy of truth shades with melancholy darkness to my view, all the hopes for myself and for others, of any grand improvements in this world !

38. *Valuable acquirements personal*.—The man into whose house I step a quarter of an hour, or whom I meet on the road, or whose hand I take, and converse with him, looking in his face the while—he so near me, that walks with me, that traverses a field or

sits in an arbor with me—he may have a soul fraught with celestial fire, stores of science, brilliant ideas, magnanimous principles, while I—I that observe his countenance and hear him talk—may have nothing of all this. He may for the last ten years have been assiduous in studies day and night, while I have consumed the morning in sleep, and the day in indolent vacancy of every sentiment, except *wishing*, “which of all employments is the worst.” What right have I to wish he should leave part of his animated and powerful character with me? But he can not, if he would. He takes his resplendent soul away, and leaves me to feel, that as *he* is individual, so, too, unfortunately, am I. The mind must operate within its own self, and by its own will; else, though surrounded by a legion of angels, it would be dark and stationary still.

39. *Approving the good but pursuing the bad.*—There is the great affair—moral and religious improvement. What is the true business of life? To grow wiser, more pious, more benevolent, more ardent, more elevated in every noble purpose and action, to resemble the Divinity! It is acknowledged; who denies or doubts it? What then? Why, care nothing at all about it! Sacrifice to trifles the energies of the heart, and the short and fleeting time allotted for divine attainments! Such is the actual course of the world. What a thing is mankind!

40. *Value of conversational power.*—Struck, in two instances, with the immense importance, to a man of sense, of obtaining a *conversational predominance*, in order to be of any use in any company exceeding the smallest number.—Example, *W. Friend*.

41. *Assimilating influence of intercourse with men of genius.*—A person who can be habitually in the company of a communicative man of original genius for a considerable time, without being greatly modified, is either a very great, or a contemptibly little

being; he has either the *vigorous* firmness of the oak, or the *heavy* firmness of the stone.

42. *Proper end of reading.*—Readers in general who have an object beyond amusement, yet are not apprized of the most important use of reading, the acquisition of *power*. *Their knowledge* is not power; and, too, the memory retains but the small part of the knowledge of which a book should be full; the grand object, then, should be to improve the strength and tone of the mind by a thinking, analyzing, discriminating, *manner* of reading.

43. *Gentleness tempered by firmness.*—A character should retain always the upright vigor of manliness; not let itself be bent and fixed in any specific form. It should be like an upright elastic tree, which bends, accommodating a little to each wind on every side, but never loses its spring and self-dependent vigor.

44. *Long familiarity with the fashionable world destroys the relish for the more substantial enjoyments of life.*—After looking a good while on the glaring side of the view, my eye does not nicely distinguish these modest beauties in the shade. Analogy: a man whose feelings and habits are formed in splendid and fashionable life, has no relish for the charms of retirement, or of secluded, affectionate society.

45. *Character of courtiers.*—Characters formed in the routine of a court, like pebbles in a brook, are rounded into a smooth uniformity, in which the points and angles of virtuous singularity are lost.

46. *Great natural amiableness of character, seems not compatible with the sublimest virtue.*—I doubt if S. is not *too innocent* to become sublimely excellent; her heart is purity and kindness; her recollections are complacent; her wishes and intentions are all good. In such a mind conscience becomes effeminate for want of hard exercise. She is exempted from those revulsions of the heart, that remorse, those self-indignant regrets, those impetuous convic-

tions, which sometimes assist to scourge the mind away from its stationary habits into such a region of daring and arduous virtue, as it would never have reached, nor even thought of, but for this mighty impulse of pain. Witness Albany in Cecilia. Vehement emotion, mortifying contrast, shuddering alarm, sting the mind into an exertion of power it was unconscious of before, and urge it on with restless velocity toward the attainment of that moral eminence, short of which it would equally scorn and *dread* to repose. We fly from pain or terror more eagerly than we pursue good; but if both these causes aid our advance!

A young eagle perhaps would never have quitted the warm luxury of its nest, and towered into the sky, if the parent had not pushed it or the tempest flung it off, and thus compelled it to fly by the danger of perishing. Is it not too possible that S. may repose complacently in the innocent softness of her nest, and die without ever having unfolded the wing of sublime adventure. At sight of such a death one would weep with tenderness, not glow with admiration; it is a charming woman that falls, not a radiant angel that rises.

47. *Exquisite susceptibility*.—(Remark on the character of Green.) There is such a predominant habit of deep feeling in his mind, that the smallest touch, a single sentence, will instantly bring his mind and his very voice into that tone. Comparing him to a musical stringed instrument I should say, that he never needed *tuning*; the strings are perfectly ready at any moment; you have only to touch them and they will sound harmoniously the genuine music of sentiment.

48. *Individuality of manners*.—Stroke of description of ——'s manners, when in the most advantageous form. "He is neither vulgar nor genteel, nor any compound of these *two kinds of vulgarity*."

He has the manners of *no class*, but something of a quite different order. His manners are a part of *his soul*, like the style of a writer of genius. His manners belong to the *individual*. He makes you think neither of clown nor gentleman—but of MAN.

49. *Discrimination of character*.—(Character of one of my acquaintance, whom a friend was describing as melancholy.) “No; her feelings are rather *fretted* than melancholy.”

50. *Description of character*.—(Feature of the character of one of my friends.) “Cautious without suspicion, and discriminating without fastidiousness.”

51. *Description of character*.—(Touch of description of a young woman in the lower ranks, not cultivated into a girl of sense, yet not so thoughtlessly vacant as the common vulgar.) “She has *notions*.”

52. *Description of character*.—*Ego*. There is a want of *continuity* in your social character. You seem broken into fragments. *H*. Well, I sparkle in fragments. *Ego*. But how much better to shine *whole*, like a mirror?

53. *Effect of amusements*.—Against amusements, defended on the plea of necessary relaxation. I maintain that excitement is excitability too. An animated, affecting interest, supplies to the mind more than it consumes. The further a man advances in the ardor that belongs to a noble employment and object, the more mightily he lives. Other men will perhaps advance with him to a certain point, and there they stop—he goes on; now the *ratio* of his progress and his animation is comparatively greater on that far-advanced ground beyond where they left him, than within an equal space in the earlier part of the course. The mind inspired with this enthusiasm asserts its grandeur. It expands toward eternity, anticipative of its destiny. It lives, as Alonzo says, not by the vulgar calculation of months and years, but along the progression of sublime attainment, and

amid the flames of an ardor which whirls it like a comet toward the sun.

Would you be a stranger to this energy of soul—or, feeling it, would you prostitute it to seek a poor factitious interest in systematic trifling?

54. *Power of bad habit.*—I know from experience that habit can, in direct opposition to *every* conviction of the mind, and but little aided by the elements of temptation (such as present pleasure, &c.), induce a repetition of the most unworthy actions. The mind is weak where it has once given way. It is long before a principle *restored* can become as firm as one that has never been moved. It is as in the case of a *mound* of a reservoir: if this mound has in one place been broken, whatever care has been taken to make the repaired part as strong as possible, the probability is, that if it give away again, it will be in *that place*.

55. *The importance and necessity of a ruling passion*—that is, some grand object, the view of which kindles all the ardor the soul is capable of, to attain or accomplish it—possibility of *creating* a ruling passion asserted.

56. *Danger of an exclusive pursuit.*—I have the highest opinion of the value of a ruling passion; but if this passion monopolizes all the man, it requires that the object be a very comprehensive or a very dignified one, to save him from being ridiculous. The devoted *antiquary*, for instance, who is passionately fond of an old coin, an old button, or an old nail, is ridiculous. The man who is *nothing but* a musician, and recognises nothing in the whole creation but crotchets and quavers, is ridiculous. So is the *nothing but* verbal critic, to whom the adjustment of a few insignificant particles in some ancient author appears a more important study than the grandest arrangement of politics or morals. Even the total devotee to the grand science, *astronomy*, incurs the

same misfortune. Religion and morals have a noble pre-eminence here; no man can become ridiculous by his passionate devotion to *them*; even a *specific* direction of this passion will make a man sublime—witness *Howard*; *specific*, I say, and correctly, though, at the same time, *any* large plan of benevolence must be comprehensive, so to speak, of a large quantity of morals.

57. *Important points ascertained.*—(1.) In my present circumstances, taken as they are, setting all the past aside, *some one thing is absolutely the best thing I can design or do.* (2.) My present sphere and course of action is most certainly *not* the best that can be. In proof of this assertion several conclusive reasons can be alleged. (3.) It strictly follows that, to change this sphere and this course, is decisively a part of my duty. (4.) And inasmuch as life is valuable, and utility *is* its value, it is clear that the case is urgent, and that I am required to attempt this change with zeal and with speed. (5.) *The greatest good* is to be my sovereign principle and object of action. (6.) Incidental principle: to make the plans I adopt for the improvement of my own mind, contribute equally, if possible, to the improvement of others (by writing letters, and otherwise). (7.) *Is not this world* a proper scene for a benevolent and ardent mind? There are bodies to heal, minds to enlighten and reform, social institutions to change, children to educate. *In all this is there nothing that I can do?!!* (8.) One of these two things, viz., congenial society, and a sphere of urgency and action, seem absolutely necessary to save my energies from torpor or extinction. If I could gain both! (9.) Oh, how I reprobate this indecision as to what character I will assume, and what designs I will attempt! (10.) I deem myself a man of capacity beyond the common; my plan of action ought therefore to include as little as possible of that which common capacity can perform

as well as mine; and as much as possible of what requires, and will educe, this superiority of ability which I attribute to myself. (11.) I want to extend, as it were, and augment my being and its interests; there is *one* mean of doing this, which, &c.

58. *Progressive formation of character overlooked.*—I have observed that most ladies who have had what is considered as an education, have no idea of an education progressive through life. Having attained a certain measure of accomplishment, knowledge, manners, &c., they consider themselves as *made up*, and so take their station; they are pictures which, being quite finished, are put in a frame—a *gilded* one, if possible—and hung up in permanence of beauty! in permanence, that is to say, till Old Time, with his rude and dirty fingers, soil the charming colors.

59. *Power of popular intelligence and virtue.*—A people advanced to such a state would make its moral power felt in a thousand ways, and every moment. This general augmentation of sense and right principle would send forth, against all arrangements and inveterate or more modern usages, of the nature of invidious exclusion, arbitrary repression, and the debasement of great public interests into a detestable private traffic, an energy which could no more be resisted than the power of the sun when he advances in the spring to annihilate the relics and vestiges of the winter. . . . There is, indeed, a hemisphere of “gross darkness over the people;” it may be possible to withhold from it long the illumination of the sun; but in the meantime it has been rent by portentous lights and flashes, which have excited a thought and agitation not to be stilled by the continuance of the gloom. There have come in on the popular mind some ideas, which the wisest of those who dread or hate their effect there, look around in vain for the means of expelling. And these glimpses of partial

intelligence, these lights of dubious and possibly destructive direction amid the night, will continue to prompt and lead that mind, with a hazard which can cease only with the opening upon it of the true daylight of knowledge.

60. *Moral illumination intercepted by popular ignorance.*—How should a man in the rudeness of an intellect left completely ignorant of truth in general, have a luminous apprehension of its most important division? There could not be in men's minds a phenomenon similar to what we image to ourselves of Goshen in the preternatural night of Egypt, a space of perfect light, defined out by a precise limit amid the general darkness. . . . These latter, so environed, would be in a condition too like that of a candle in the mephitic air of a vault.

61. *A soul confined by impervious prison-walls of ignorance.*—We can imagine this ill-fated spirit, especially if by nature of the somewhat finer temperament, thus detached from all vital connexion, secluded from the whole universe, and enclosed as by a prison-wall—we can imagine it sometimes moved with an indistinct longing for its appropriate interests; and going round and round by this dark, dead wall, to seek for any spot where there might be a chance of escape, or any crevice where a living element for the soul transpires; and then, as feeling it all in vain, dejectedly resigning itself again to its doom.

62. *Affecting retrospective view of the ignorance of the world.*—We of the present time are convicted of exceeding stupidity, if we think it not worth while to go a number of ages back to contemplate the mass of mankind, the wide world of beings such as ourselves, sunk in darkness and wretchedness, and to consider what it is that is taught by so melancholy an exhibition. What is to give fullness of evidence to an instruction, if a world be too narrow? what is to give weight, if a world be too light?

63. *Freedom and spontaneous emanation of knowledge.*—Knowledge, which was formerly a thing to be searched and dug for “as for hid treasures,” has seemed at last beginning to effloresce through the surface of the ground on all sides of us.

64. *Mind extinguished by the body.*—By the very constitution of the human nature, the mind seems half to belong to the senses, it is so shut within them, affected by them, dependent on them for pleasure, as well as for activity, and impotent but through their medium.

65. *Knowledge like the sun.*—To say that under long absence of the sun any tract of terrestrial nature *must infallibly* be reduced to desolation, is not to say or imply that under the benignant influence of that luminary the same region must, as necessarily and unconditionally, be a scene of beauty; but the only hope, for the only possibility, is for the field visited by much of that sweet influence.

66. *Secular knowledge associated with religious.*—They will talk of giving the people an education specifically religious; a training to conduct them on through a close avenue, looking straight before them to descry distant spiritual objects, while shut out from all the scene right and left, by fences that tell them there is nothing that concerns them there. There may be rich and beautiful fields of knowledge, but they are not to be trampled by vulgar feet.

67. *Estimate of the influence of education.*—Like trying to specify, in brief terms, what a highly-improved portion of the ground, in a tract rude and sterile if left to itself, has received from cultivation; an attempt which would carry back the imagination through a progression of states and appearances, in which the now fertile spots, and picture-like scenes, and commodious passes, and pleasant habitations, may or must have existed in the advance from the original rudeness. . . If, while these benefits are com-

ing so numerous in his sight, like an irregular crowd of loaded fruit-trees, one partially seen behind the offered luxury of another, and others still descried, through intervals, in the distances, he can imagine them all devastated and swept away from him, leaving him in a scene of mental desolation—and if he shall then consider that nearly such is the state of the great multitude—he will surely feel that a deep compassion is due to so depressed a condition of existence. . . . A few false notions, such as could hardly fail to take the place of absent truth in the ignorant mind, however crude they might be, and however deficient for constituting a full system of error, would be sure to dilate themselves so as to have an operation at all the points where truth is wanting. . . . The dark void of ignorance, instead of remaining a mere negation, becomes filled with agents of perversion and destruction; as sometimes the gloomy apartments of a deserted mansion have become a den of robbers and murderers. . . . The *conjunction* of truths is of the utmost importance for preserving the genuine tendency, and securing the appropriate efficacy, of each. It is an unhappy “lack of knowledge” when there is not enough to preserve, to what there is of it, the honest, beneficial quality of knowledge. How many of the follies, excesses, and crimes, in the course of the world, have taken their pretended warrant from some fragment of truth, dis severed from the connexion of truths indispensable to its right operation, and in that detached state easily perverted into coalescence with the most pernicious principles, which concealed and gave effect to their malignity under the falsified authority of a truth.

68. *Prevailing perversion of conscience.*—Every serious observer has been struck and almost shocked to observe, in what a very small degree conscience is a *necessary* attribute of the human creature; and how nearly a nonentity the whole system of moral

principles may be, as to any recognition of it by an unadapted spirit. While that system is of a substance veritable and eternal, and stands forth in its exceeding breadth, marked with the strongest characters and prominences, it has to these persons hardly the reality or definiteness of a shadow, except in a few matters, if we may so express it, of the grossest bulk. There must be glaring evidence of something bad in what is done, or questioned whether to be done, before conscience will come to its duty, or give proof of its existence. There must be a violent alarm of mischief or danger before this drowsy and ignorant magistrate will interfere.

CHAPTER VIII.

YOUTH—ITS ADVANTAGES AND PERILS—DOMESTIC
LIFE AND VIRTUES—EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

1. *Active powers of youth.*—How precious a thing is youthful *energy*; if only it could be preserved entirely *englobed*, as it were, within the bosom of the young adventurer, till he can come and offer it forth a sacred emanation in yonder temple of truth and virtue; but, alas! all along as he goes toward it, he advances through an avenue, formed by a long line of tempters and demons on each side, all prompt to touch him with their conductors, and draw this divine electric element, with which he is charged, away!

2. *Temptations of youth.*—It would be a fine position, doubtless, for a man to stand on a spot where there was a powerful action of all the elements almost close around him; the earth he stood on blooming with flowers; water thrown in impetuous falls and torrents on the one side—some superb fire near at hand on the other—and the winds whirling, as if to exasperate them both; but he would need look carefully to his movements, especially if informed that others carelessly standing there had been whirled into destruction; or if he saw the fact. Let young persons observe what is actually becoming of those who surrender themselves to their passions and wild propensities. What numbers! Then in themselves observe seriously whither these inward traitors and tempters really tend; and then think whether sober-

ness of mind be not a pearl of great price, and whether there can be any such thing without a systematic self-government.

3. *Successive periods of life soon passed.*—Let it not be forgotten that youth will soon be passed away. Nay, there is even the wish in its possessors for the larger portion of it to haste away! A most striking illustration of the vanity of our state on earth. It rapidly runs on to the longed-for age of twenty. But there it retains its impetus of motion, and runs beyond that point as fast as it ran thither. With what magical fleetness it passes away till it loses its quality, and *life is youth* no more!

4. *Disregard of the experience of others an ill omen.* It is a bad sign in youth to be utterly heedless of the dictates of the experience of persons more advanced in life. It is, indeed, impossible for youth to enter *fully* into the spirit of such experience. But to despise it, to fancy it proceeds entirely from disappointment, mortified feeling, moroseness, or the mere coldness of age, augurs ill—and so these young persons themselves will think, when they, in their turn, come to inculcate the lessons of *their* more aged experience.

5. *The harvest of later life must correspond with the seeding of youth.*—If there be a vain, giddy, thoughtless, ill-improved youth, the effects of it will infallibly come in after-life. If there be a neglected understanding, a conscience feebly and rudely constituted, good principles but slightly fixed or even apprehended, an habitual levity of spirit, a chase of frivolities, a surrender to the passions—the natural consequences of these will follow.

6. *Time is the greatest of tyrants.*—As we go on toward age, he *taxes* our health, our limbs, our faculties, our strength, and our features.

7. *Youth is not like a new garment*, which we can keep fresh and fair by wearing sparingly. Youth,

while we have it, we *must* wear daily, and it *will* fast wear away.

8. *The retrospect on youth* is too often like looking back on what was a fair and promising country, but is now desolated by an overwhelming torrent, from which we have just escaped.

9. *Or it is like visiting the grave of a friend* whom we had injured, and are precluded by his death from the possibility of making him an atonement.

10. *The whole system of life* goes on this principle of *selling* oneself: then the question of estimates should for ever recur—"My time for *this*?"—"and *this*?"

11. *Price of pleasure*.—All pleasure must be *bought* at the price of pain. The difference between false pleasure and true is just this: for the *true*, the price is paid *before* you enjoy it; for the *false*, *after* you enjoy it.

12. *Deplored neglect of culture of youth*.—How much I regret to see so generally abandoned to the weeds of vanity that fertile and vigorous space of life, in which *might be planted* the oaks and fruit-trees of enlightened principle and virtuous habit, which, growing up, would yield to old age an enjoyment, a glory, and a shade!

13. *Insensibility to the approach of old age*.—It is a most amazing thing that young people never consider they shall grow old. I would, to young women especially, renew the monition of this anticipation every hour of every day. I wish we could make all the criers, watchmen, ballad-singers, and even parrots, repeat to them continually, "You will be an old woman—you will—and you." Then, if they have left themselves to depend, almost entirely, as most of them do, on exterior and casual accommodations, they will be wretchedly neglected. No beaux will then draw a chair close to them, and sweetly simper,

and whisper that the bowers of paradise did not afford so delightful a place.

14. *True value of youth.*—(Conclusion of a moral, monitory letter to a young acquaintance.)—I scarcely need to remark on the value of youth, with all its living energy; but I may express my regret at seeing all around me, a possession so sweet and fair, so miserably poisoned and stained. I have only a question or two for you. Why do you think it happy to *be* young? why? When you shall be advanced toward the conclusion of life, why will you think it happy to *have been* young? Is there the least possibility or danger that then you may not think so at all? Why do you look with pleasure on the scene of coming life? Does the pleasure spring from a sentiment less noble than the hope of securing, as you go on, those inestimable attainments, which will not decay with declining life, and may consequently set age, and time, and dissolution, at defiance? You gladly now see life before you, but there is a moment which you are destined to meet when you will have passed across it, and will find yourself at the farther edge. Are you perfectly certain that at that moment you will be in possession of something that will enable you not to care that life is gone? If you should *not*, what then?

15. *Youth improved makes old age happy.*—How often you see in the old persons who spent so gay a youth, an extinction of all the fire! Sometimes they try to brighten up for a moment, but they betray an exhaustion and desertion. They are sensible that life is nearly gone by. But its close they can not bear to think of, no more than when they were young; but have no longer the youthful means of driving away the thought. They are sometimes pensively gloomy; often peevishly and morosely so. Oh! had they but in early life consecrated the animation of their spirits, by giving a larger share of it to God,

to reserve it for them ! Had they often tempered and repressed the vivacity of their hearts, by solemn thoughts of hereafter, by a vigorous application to wisdom ! they might have been fired with spirit and animation now, which not the approach of death could chill or quench ! nay, would have burnt the brighter in that formidable atmosphere.

16. *Philosophy of the happiness of domestic and all human alliances.*—I have often contended that attachments between friends and lovers can not be secured strong, and perpetually augmenting, except by the intervention of some interest which is not *personal*, but which is common to them both, and toward which their attentions and passions are directed with still more animation than even toward each other. If the whole attention is to be directed, and the whole sentimentalism of the heart concentrated on each other ; if it is to be an unvaried, "*I toward you, and you toward me,*" as if each were to the other, not an ally or companion joined to pursue happiness, but the very end and object—happiness itself ; if it is the circumstance of reciprocation itself, and not what is reciprocated, that is to supply perennial interest to affection ; if it is to be mind still reflecting back the gaze of mind, and reflecting it again, cherub toward cherub, as on the ark, and no luminary or glory between them to supply beams and warmth to both—I foresee that the hope will disappoint, the plan will fail. Affection, on these terms, will be reduced to the condition of a famishing animal's stomach, the opposite sides of which, for want of pabulum introduced, meet and digest, and consume each other. Attachment must burn in oxygen, or it will go out ; and, by oxygen, I mean a mutual admiration and pursuit of virtue, improvement, utility, the pleasures of taste, or some other interesting concern, which shall be the element of their commerce, and make

them love each other not only *for* each other, but as devotees to some third object which they both adore. The affections of the soul will feel a dissatisfaction and a recoil if, as they go forth, they are entirely intercepted and stopped by any object that is not *ideal*; they wish rather to be like rays of light glancing on the side of an object, and then sloping and passing away; they wish the power of elongation, through a series of interesting points, on toward infinity.

Human society is a vast circle of beings on a plain, in the midst of which stands the shrine of goodness and happiness, inviting all to approach; now the attached pairs in this circle should not be continually looking on each other, but should turn their faces very often toward this central object, and as they advance, they will, like radii from the circumference to the centre, continually become closer to each other, as they approximate to their mutual and ultimate object.

17. *Growing strength of mutual affections.*—One should think that a tender friendship might become more intimate and entire the older the parties grew; as two trees planted near each other, the higher they grow and the more widely they spread—intermingle more completely their branches and their foliage.

18. *Necessities of man's social nature.*—We called on an affable, worthy, pious woman rather beginning to be aged (never married), who lives quite alone. Asked her whether she had not sometimes painful cravings for society. She said she had not; and that her habit was so settled to solitude, that she often felt the occasional hour spent with some other human beings tedious and teasing. We could not explain this fact. Long conversation, in walking on, respecting the social nature of man. *Why* is this being, that looks at me and talks, whose bosom is warm, and whose nature and wants resemble my own—necessary to me? This kindred being whom I love, *is* more to me than

all yonder stars of heaven, and than all the inanimate objects on earth. Delightful necessity of my nature! But to what a world of disappointments and vexations is this social feeling liable, and how few are made happy by it, in any such degree as I picture to myself and long for!

19. *Disturbances of mutual confidence and affection not necessary to confirm them.*—When expressing a conjecture that, as in the previous course of love, so after marriage, it may be that *reconciliations* after disagreements are accompanied by a peculiar fascinating tenderness—I was told by a very sensible experimentalist that the possibility of this feeling continues but for a while, and that it will be extremely perceptible when the period is come, that no such felicitous charm will compensate for domestic misunderstandings. I, however, can not but think that when this period *is* come, the sentimental enthusiasm is greatly subsided—that its most enchanting interest is, indeed, quite gone off.

20. *Incipient domestic disputes greatly to be dreaded.*—A very respectable widow, remarking on matrimonial quarrels, said that the first quarrel that goes the length of any harsh or contemptuous language, is an unfortunate *epoch* in married life, for that the delicate respectfulness being thus *once* broken down, the same kind of language much more easily comes afterward; there is a feeling of having *less to love* than before.

21. *How far should mutual confidence be extended?*—Whether two much-attached friends, suppose a married pair, might adopt a system of confidence so entire, as to be *total confessors* to each other; disclosing, for instance, at the end of each day, all the most unworthy or ungracious ideas and feelings that had passed through their minds during the course of it, both with respect to each other, and any other question or thing?

22. *Delicate concealment of ignorance or error of a companion.*—One has been amused sometimes, when one of the domestic associates has advanced an opinion, or recited a supposed fact, which the *other* has thought extremely absurd, to see that other in haste to express his or her contempt of such folly of opinion, or credulity of belief, instead of silently sliding the circumstance or the subject out of conversation, or mildly expressing that he or she can not entirely concur in opinion or belief, and endeavoring to make as good a retreat as possible for the associate's ignorance or weakness. I say, one has been *amused*; but in some instances one has felt a painful sympathy with the person so treated with scorn by an intimate relative, and before a number of witnesses, each of whom would have politely let pass the unfortunate remark or narration. Striking instances in Mr. and Mrs. —, and Dr. and Mrs. —.

23. *In domestic disputes, a want of sentiment in the parties, greatly diminishes suffering.*—Among married persons of the common size and texture of minds, the grievances they occasion one another are rather feelings of *irritated temper* than of *hurt sentiment*; an important distinction. Of the latter perhaps they were never capable, or perhaps have long since worn out the capability. Their pain, therefore, is far less deep and acute than a *sentimental* observer would suppose or would in the same circumstances, with *their own* feelings, suffer.

24. *In congenial domestic alliances a hopeless predicament.*—A man or woman with a stupid or perverse partner, but still hoping to see this partner become all that is desired, is like a man with a wooden leg wishing it might become a vital one, and sometimes for a moment fancying this almost possible.

25. *Inconsiderate domestic alliances.*—Their courtship was carried on in poetry. Alas! many an en-

amored pair have courted in poetry, and after marriage, *lived in prose.*

26. *Early education greatly defective.*—Education always appears to me as the one thing which, taken generally, is the most vilely managed on earth.

27. *Undue restraint of children to be deprecated.*—A very important principle in education, never to confine children long to any one occupation or place. It is totally against their nature, as indicated in all their voluntary exercises. Was very much struck with this consideration to-day. I was incommoded a while by three or four children in front of the house, who made an obsteporous noise, from the glee of some amusement that seemed to please them exceedingly. But I *knew* that they would not be pleased very long; accordingly in about half an hour they were tired of sport, and went off in quest of something else. I inferred the impossibility, in the discipline of education, of totally restraining the innate propensity, and the folly of attempting it.

28. *Education of children in simple habits important.*—Interesting conversation with Mr. S. on education. Astonishment and grief at the folly, especially in times like the present, of those parents who totally forget, in the formation of their children's habits, to inspire that vigorous independence which acknowledges the smallest possible number of wants, and so avoids or triumphs over the negation of a thousand indulgences, by always having been taught and accustomed to do without them. "How many things," says Socrates, "I do not want."

29. *Children's ball*—a detestable vanity. Mamma solicitously busy for several weeks previously, with all the assistance too of milliners and *tasteful* friends, with lengthened dissertations, for the sole purpose of equipping two or three children to appear in one of these miserable exhibitions. The whole business

seems a contrivance, expressly intended to concentrate to a focus of preternatural heat and stimulus every vanity and frivolity of the time, in order to blast for ever the simplicity of their little souls, and kindle their vain propensities into a thousand times the force that mere nature could ever have supplied.

30. *Proper companionship of children important.*

—Observed with regret one or two children of a respectable family mingling in this group with several little dirty, profane blackguards. *Qu.* As to the best method of preventing all communication of children meant to be educated in the best manner, with all other children, whether of the vulgar class, or the genteel, which will do as much mischief as the vulgar.

31. *True scope and aim of education.*—Judicious education anxiously displays to its pupils its own insufficiency and confined scope, and tells them that this whole earth can be but a place of tuition, till it become either a depopulated ruin, or an Elysium of perfect and happy beings. Its object is to qualify them for entering with advantage into the greater school where the whole of life is to be spent, and its last emphatic lesson is to enforce the necessity of an ever-watchful discipline, which must be imposed by each individual *self*, when exempted from all external authority. The privileges, the hazards, and the accountability of this maturity of life, and the consignment to one's self, make it an interesting situation. It is to be intrusted with the care of a being infinitely dear, whose destiny is yet unknown, whose faculties are not fully expanded, whose interests we but dimly ascertain, whose happiness we may throw away, and whose animation we had rather indulge to revel than train to labor.

32. *Fearful responsibility of parents.*—Will endeavor not to forget the impressive lessons on *education*, both as to the importance and the mode of it, supplied by Mr. ——'s family, the best school for in-

struction on this subject I ever saw. In that family the whole system and all the parts of it are so *correctly and transcendently bad*, that it is only necessary to adopt a directly opposite plan in *every* point to be exactly right.

I suppose it never occurs to parents that to throw vilely-educated young people on the world is, independently of the injury to the young people themselves, a positive *crime*, and of very great magnitude; as great for instance, as burning their neighbor's house, or poisoning the water in his well. In pointing out to them what is wrong, even if they acknowledge the justness of the statement, one can not make them feel a sense of *guilt*, as in other proved charges. That they *love* their children extenuates to their consciences every parental folly that may at last produce in the children every desperate vice.

33. *Rules for early religious education.*—Perhaps one of the most prudential rules respecting the enforcement on the minds of children of the conviction that they are accountable to an all-seeing though unseen Governor, and liable to the punishment of obstinate guilt in a future state, is, to take opportunities of impressing this idea the most cogently, at seasons when the children are not lying under any blame or displeasure, at moments of serious kindness on the part of the parents, and serious inquisitiveness on the part of the children, leaving in some degree the conviction to have its own effect, greater or less, in each particular instance of guilt, according to the greater or less degree of aggravation which the child's own conscience can be made secretly to acknowledge in that guilt. And another obvious rule will be, that when he is to be solemnly reminded of these religious sanctions and dangers in immediate connexion with an actual instance of criminality in his conduct, the instance should be one of the most serious of his faults, that will bear the utmost seriousness of such an ad-

monition. As to how early in life this doctrine may be communicated, there needs no more precise rule than this; that it may be as early as well-instructed children are found to show any signs of prolonged or returning inquisitiveness concerning the supreme *cause* of all that they behold, and concerning what becomes of persons known to them in their neighborhood, whom they find passing, one after another, through the change called death, about which their curiosity will not be at all satisfied by merely learning its name. . . . There is an absolute necessity of presenting these ideas in a correct though inadequate form as early as possible to the mind, to prevent their being fixed there in a form that shall be absurd and injurious. . . . They may be taught to apprehend it as an awful reality, that they are perpetually under his inspection; and as a certainty, that they must at length appear before him in judgment, and find, in another life, the consequences of what they are in spirit and conduct here. It is to be impressed on them, that his will is the supreme law; that his declarations are the most momentous truth known on earth; and his favor and condemnation the greatest good and evil.

34. *Said of a lady who infamously spoilt her son—a most perverse child.*—She will have her reward; she cultivates a night-shade, and is destined to eat its poisoned berries.

35. *Apprehensions of parents for the welfare of their children.*—I constantly and systematically regard this world with such horror, as a place for the rising human beings to come into, that it is an emphatical satisfaction, I may say pleasure, to me (except in a few cases of rare promise), to hear of their prematurely leaving it. I have innumerable times been amazed that parents should not, in this view, be greatly consoled in their loss. Let them look at this world! with sin, temptations, snares of the devil, bad

examples, seducing companions, disasters, vexations, dishonors, and afflictions, all over it; and their children to enter the scene with a radically corrupt nature, adapted to receive the mischief of all its worst influences and impressions; let them look at all this, and then say, deliberately, whether it be not well that their children are saved these dreadful dangers! Let them behold what the *vast majority* of children *do* actually become—*have* actually become, in mature life; many of them, millions of them! decidedly bad and wretched, and causes of what is bad and wretched around them; and, short of this worst event, an *immense* majority of them careless of religion, salvation, eternity! I repeat, let them look at all this, and then ask themselves, whether it be not a vain presumption that exactly *their* children, nay, *every* parent in his turn, *my* children, are sure to be exceptions.

CHAPTER IX.

HUMAN LIFE: ITS FRAILTY AND BREVITY—FUTURE
LIFE: ITS MYSTERIES AND REVELATIONS—PERSUA-
SIVES TO A CHRISTIAN LIFE.

1. *Reason of the undue influence of things seen.*—THE power of objects to interest the affections, depends on their being objects of sight. The affections often seem reluctant to admit objects to their internal communion except through the avenues of the senses. The objects must be, as it were, authenticated by the senses, must first occupy and please them—or they are regarded by the inner faculties as something strange, foreign, out of our sympathies, or unreal. . . . The objects which we can see, give a more positive and direct impression of reality; there can be no dubious surmise whether they exist or not; the sense of their presence is more absolute. When an object is seen before me, or beside me, I am instantly in all the relations of being present; I can not feel and act as if no such object were there; I can not by an act of my mind put it away from me. . . . Visible objects, when they have been seen, can be clearly kept in mind in absence—during long periods—at the greatest distance. We can revert to the time when they were seen. We can have a lively image; seem to be looking at it still. But the great objects of faith having never been seen, the mind has no express type to revert to. The idea of them is to be still again and again formed anew; fluctuates and varies; is brighter and dimmer; alternates as between substance and shadow.

2. *Intimations of the transitoriness of life.*—If the soul would expand itself, and with a lively sensibility to receive upon it the significance, the glancing intimation, the whispered monition of all things that are adapted to remind it of the fact—what a host of ideas would strike it! Then we should hardly see a shadow pass, or a vapor rise, or a flower fade, or a leaf fall, still less a human visage withered in age, but we should have a thought of the transient continuance of our life.

3. *Man fades as a leaf.*—The infinite masses of foliage, which unfolded so beautifully in vegetable life, in the spring, and have adorned our landscape during the summer, have faded, fallen, and perished. We have beheld the “grace of the fashion” of them disclosed, continuing awhile bright in the sunshine, and gone for ever. Now we are admonished not to see the very *leaves* fade, without being reminded that *something else* is also fading. . . . Can any of us say they have had, during the recent season, as distinct and prolonged a reflection on the fact that our own mortal existence is fading, as we have had a perception of the fading and extinction of vegetable life? It would seem as if the continued pressure of ill health, or the habitual spectacle of sickness and decline in our friends, were necessary in order to keep us reminded of the truth which is expressed in the text.

4. *Man fades while Nature blooms.*—Amid this glowing life of the vernal season, there are languor, and sickness, and infirm old age, and death! While Nature smiles, there are many pale countenances that do *not*. Sometimes you have met, slowly pacing the green meadow or the garden, a figure emaciated by illness, or feeble with age; and were the more forcibly struck by the spectacle as seen amid a luxuriance of life. For a moment, you have felt as if all the living beauty faded or receded from around, in the shock of the contrast. You may have gone into

a house beset with roses and all the pride of spring, to see a person lingering and sinking in the last feebleness of mortality. You may have seen a funeral train passing through a flowery avenue. The ground which is the depository of the dead, bears, not the less for that, its share of the beauty of spring. The great course of Nature pays no regard to the particular circumstances of man—no suspension, no sympathy.

5. *Winter, though denying other gifts, yields a grave.*—Look at the earth, speaking generally! look at the trees! an obdurate negation—an appearance of having ceased to be for us—under a mighty interdict of Heaven! We might nearly as well go to the graves of the dead to ask for sympathy and aid. The ground seems not willing to yield us anything but a grave; and *that* it is yielding every day to numbers to whom it would have yielded nothing else! Striking consideration, that for *this* service the earth is always ready! How many graves for the dying it will afford during these months, in which it will afford no sustenance to the living! Would it not be a most solemn manifestation, if, in the living crowd, we could discern those to whom the earth, the ground, has but one thing more to supply?

6. *Much of human decay not visible.*—The most decayed and faded portion of the living world is much less in sight than the fresh and vigorous. Think how many infirm, sick, debilitated, languishing, and almost dying persons there are, that are rarely or never out in public view—not met in our streets, roads, or places of resort—not in our religious assemblies! And then “out of sight, out of mind,” in a great degree! Thus we look at the living world so as not to read the destiny written on every forehead, and in this thoughtlessness are the more apt to forget our own.

7. *Unperceived succession of human generations.*—

Human beings are continually going and coming, so that, though all die, MAN in his vast assemblage is always here. . . . The order of the world is that men be withdrawn one by one, one here and one there, leaving the mighty mass, to general appearance, still entire—except in the case of vast and desolating calamities. Thus we see nothing parallel to the general autumnal fading of the leaf. More like the *ever-greens*, which lose their leaves by individuals, and still maintain their living foliage—to the thoughtless spectator, the human race is presented under such a fallacious appearance as if it always lived.

8. *Uncertain continuance of life.*—Life is expenditure: we have it but as continually losing it; we have no use of it, but as continually wasting it. Suppose a man confined in some fortress, under the doom to stay there till his death; and suppose there is there for his use a dark reservoir of water, to which it is certain none can ever be added. He knows, suppose, that the quantity is not very great; he can not penetrate to ascertain how much, but it *may* be *very little*. He has drawn from it by means of a fountain a good while already, and draws from it every day; but how would he feel each time of drawing, and each time of thinking of it? not as if he had a perennial spring to go to; not, “I have a reservoir—I may be at ease.” No! but, “I had water yesterday; I have water to-day; but my having had it, and my having it to-day, is the very cause that I shall *not* have it on some day that is approaching. At the same time I am compelled to this fatal expenditure!” So of our mortal, transient life!

9. *The records of time are emphatically the history of death.*—A whole review of the world, from this hour to the age of Adam, is but the vision of an infinite multitude of dying men. During the more quiet intervals, we perceive individuals falling into the dust, through all classes and all lands. Then come floods

and conflagrations, famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, and battles, which leave the most crowded and social scenes silent. The human race resemble the withered foliage of a wide forest; while the air is calm, we perceive single leaves scattering here and there from the branches; but sometimes a tempest or a whirlwind precipitates thousands in a moment. It is a moderate computation which supposes a hundred thousand millions to have died since the exit of righteous Abel. Oh, it is true that ruin hath entered the creation of God! that sin has made a breach in that innocence which fenced man round with immortality! and even now the great spoiler is ravaging the world. As mankind have still sunk into the dark gulf of the past, history has given buoyancy to the most wonderful of their achievements and characters, and caused them to float down the stream of time to our own age. . . . What an affecting scene is a dying world! Who is that destroying angel whom the Eternal has employed to sacrifice all our devoted race? Advancing onward over the whole field of time, he hath smitten the successive crowds of our hosts with death; and to *us* he now approaches nigh. Some of our friends have trembled, and sickened, and expired, at the signals of his coming; already we hear the thunder of his wings: soon his eye of fire will throw mortal fainting on all our companies; his prodigious form will to us blot out the sun, and his sword sweep us all from the earth; "for the living know that they shall die."

10. *Memorials of advancing life.*—It is not the being aware of any physical or mental decline, but a remoteness in my retrospects; the disappearance by death of so many of my elders, and even coevals; the dispersion and changed condition of my early companions; the alteration of a great part of the economy of my feelings; the five feet ten inches altitude of persons whom I recollect as infants when I

first reached that altitude; and the very sound and appearance of the word *forty* (to the number meant in which word I shall soon have a very particular relation)—these, and I suppose many more things, concur to make me feel how far I have gone already past the meridian hour of the short day of life.

11. *The aged—presages of old age.*—Like the last few faded leaves, lingering and fluttering on a tree. Let them think what they feel to be gone—freshness of life; vernal prime; overflowing spirits; elastic, bounding vigor; insuppressible activity; quick, ever-varying emotion; delightful unfolding of the faculties; the sense of more and more power of both body and spirit; the prospect as if life were entire before them; and all overspread with brightness and fair colors! There are circumstances that will not let them forget *whereabouts* they are in life; feelings of positive infirmity; diminished power of exertion; gray hairs; failure of sight; besetting pains; apprehensive caution against harm and inconvenience; often what are called nervous affections; slight injuries to the body far less easily repaired.

12. *Old age the safer period of life.*—And, considering our age, and now established principles, views, and habits, it is no slight satisfaction to hope that we are now passed safe beyond the most unsteady, hazardous, and tempting periods, feelings, and scenes of life. Not that we can ever be safe but by Divine preservation; but still it is no trifling advantage that some of the most pernicious influences of a bad world have necessarily, as to us, lost very much of their power.

13. *Insensibility to mortal destiny.*—How comes it to be possible that men can see the partakers of their own nature and destiny withering and falling from the tree of life, and calmly look at them in their fall in the dust with hardly one pointed reflection turned on themselves! As if the careless spectator

should say, "Well, they must go! there is no help for them! unfortunate lot! but it is nothing to me except to pity them for a moment, and be glad that I am under no such disastrous decree!" So little is there of ominous sympathy felt, while men see neighbors, acquaintances, friends, relatives, one by one fading, falling, and vanishing.

14. *Retrospect of the year.*—We have been consuming our years; we have very nearly expended another; think how nearly it is gone from us! Yonder as it were behind is the long lapse of it. As if we stood by a stream bearing various things upon it away. We can look back to its successive times and incidents, as what we *were* present to. But Omnipotence can not take us back to meet again its commencement, or any portion or circumstance of it. We are present now to one of its latest diminutive portions, which Omnipotence can not withhold from following the departed. We are occupying it, breathing in it, thinking in it, for nearly the last time; little more of it is remaining than time enough for bidding it a solemn and reflective *farewell*! A few hours more, and the year can never be of the smallest further use to us, except in the way of *reflection*. . . . It is like a seed-time gone, and the tract of ground sunk under the sea. It is as a treasure-house burnt; but of which, nevertheless, we may find some little of the gold melted into a different form in the ashes. Let us then, in parting with the year, try to gain from it the last and only thing it can give us—some profit by means of our thoughts reaching back to what is gone.

15. *Misimprovement of time.*—Our year has been *parallel* to that of those persons who have made the noblest use of it. We can represent to ourselves the course of the most devoted servant of God through this past year, in various states, and modes of employment. Now *we* had just the same hours, days,

and months, as *they*. Let the comparison be made. Why was the day, the week, the month, of less value in our hands than in theirs? Do we stand for ever dissociated from them upon this year? How desirable that we may be associated with them during the next, if God prolong our life! . . . And, at the very times when we were heedlessly letting it pass by, throwing it away—there were, here and there, men passionately imploring a day—an hour—a few moments—more. And at those same seasons some men, here and there, were most diligently and earnestly redeeming and improving the very moments we lost! the identical moments—for we had the same, and of the same length and value. Some of them are, in heaven itself, now enjoying the consequences. Where do *we* promise ourselves the consequences of those portions of time lost?

16. *Precursors of approaching death unwelcome.*—How unwelcome are these shortening days! The precursory intimations of winter even before the summer itself is gone, and how almost frightfully rapid the vicissitudes of the seasons, telling us of time, the consumption of life, the approximation to its end. That end; that end! And there is an hour decreed for the final one. It *will* be here—it will be past. And then—that other life! that other world! Let us pray more earnestly than ever, that the *first hour after the last* may open upon us in celestial light.

17. *Death the termination of a journey.*—The idea of his moving rapidly on, in vigorous life to a certain spot, to one precise point, and on coming exactly thither, being, as in a moment, in another world, renders the mystery of death still more intense. And there being nothing to excite the slightest anticipation, when he set out on the journey, when he came within a mile—within a few steps of the fatal point! How true the saying, that “in the midst of life *we* are in death!”

18. *Mystery of the change of death.*—In looking on the deserted countenance, through which mind and thought had so recently, but, as it were, a few minutes before, emanated, I felt what profound mystery there was in the change. What is it that is gone? What is it now?

19. *What the activity of the future state.*—Very many human beings have within our knowledge left this scene of action. We can recall them to thought individually; we observed their actions. How have they been employed since? The triflers how? The active enemies of God how? The servants of Christ how? We can not very formally represent to ourselves how; but it is interesting to look into that solemn obscurity—to think of it. Think of all that have done all the works under the sun “ever since that luminary began to shine on this world—now in action in some other regions! Think of all those whose actions we have beheld and judged—those recently departed—our own personal friends! Have they not a scene of amazing novelty and change; while yet there is a relation, a connecting quality between their actions *before* and now. . . . The difference and comparison would dilate our faculties to the intensest wonder.

20. *Revelations of eternity.*—There is eternity; you have lived perhaps thirty years; you are by no means entitled to expect so much more life; you at the utmost will very soon, *very* soon die! What follows? Eternity! a boundless region; inextinguishable life; myriads of mighty and strange spirits; vision of God; glories, horrors.

21. *The future partially revealed or wisely veiled.*—We here “know but in part.” So “in part,” that just *the* part, the portion which we wish to attain, is divided off from our reach. It seems as if a dis severing principle, or a dark veil, fell down exactly at the point where we think we are near upon the knowl-

edge we are pursuing. We reach the *essential* question of the inquiry; let that be surpassed and we should arrive at the truth—exult in the knowledge. But just there we are stopped by something insuperable; and there we stand, like prisoners looking at their impregnable wall. . . . In this life men are placed in this world's relations, a system of relations corresponding to our inhabiting a gross, frail, mortal body, with all its wants and circumstances—and that we have to perform all the various business of this world. That there are innumerable thoughts, cares, employments, belonging inseparably to this our state; and that therefore there must not be such a manifestation of the future state as would confound, stop, and break up, this system.

22. *Future world veiled.*—"How gloomy that range of lamps looks (at some distance along the border of a common), how dark it is all around them." Yes, like the lights that are disclosed to us from the other world, which simply tell us, that there, in the solemn distance, where they burn encircled with darkness, that world is, but shed no light on the region.

23. *Mystery of man's relations to the future—his uncertain progression.*—Many of these questions are such as, being pursued, soon lead the thinking spirit to the brink, as it were, of a vast unfathomable gulf. It is arrested, and becomes powerless at the limit; there it stands, looking on a dark immensity; the little light of intellect and knowledge which it brings or kindles, can dart no ray into the mysterious obscurity. Sometimes there seems to be seen, at some unmeasured distance, a glimmering spot of light, but it makes nothing around it visible, and itself vanishes.

But often it is one unbounded, unvaried, starless, midnight darkness—without one luminous point through infinite space. To this obscurity we are brought in pursuing any one of very many questions of mere speculation and curiosity. But there is one

question which combines with the interest of speculation and curiosity an interest incomparably greater, nearer, more affecting, more solemn. It is the simple question—"WHAT SHALL WE BE?" How soon it is spoken! but who shall reply? Think, how profoundly this question, this mystery, concerns us—and in comparison with this, what are to us all questions of all sciences? What to us all researches into the constitution and laws of material nature? What—all investigations into the history of past ages? What to us—the future career of events in the progress of states and empires? What to us—what shall become of this globe itself, or all the mundane system? What we shall be, *we ourselves*, is the matter of surpassing and infinite interest. . . . I that am now, that am here, that am thus; what shall I be, and *where*, and how, when this vast system of nature shall have passed away? What—after ages more than there are leaves or blades of grass on the whole surface of the globe or atoms in its enormous mass shall have expired? What—after another such stupendous lapse of duration shall be gone? Those terms of amazing remoteness will arrive; yes those periods the very thought of which engulfs our faculties will be *come* and will be *past*! To ascertain, for instance, the yet unknown course of a great river, has excited the invincible ardor of some of the most enterprising of mortals—who, in long succession, have dared all perils, and sacrificed their lives. To force a passage among unknown seas and coasts, in the most frowning and dreadful regions and climates; to penetrate to the discovery of the hidden laws, and powers, and relations of nature; to ascertain the laws, the courses, the magnitudes, the distances, of the heavenly bodies; something—is the truth, in all these subjects of ambitious and intent inquisition. But what if all this could be known? If we could have the entire structure of this globe disclosed, to

its very centre, to our sight or intelligence ; if through some miraculous intervention of Divine power, we could have a vision of the whole economy of one of the remotest stars ; or if our intelligence could pass down, under a prophetic illumination, to the ends of time in this world, beholding, in continued series, the grand course of the world's affairs and events ; what would any or all of these things be, in comparison with the mighty prospect of our own eternal existence ? with what is to be revealed upon us, and to be realized in our very being, and experience, through everlasting duration ?

24. *Irrepressible longing to know the future.*—But oh ! my dear friend, whither is it that you are going ? Where is it that you will be a few short weeks or days hence. I have affecting cause to think and to wonder concerning that unseen world ; to desire, were it permitted to mortals, one glimpse of that mysterious economy, to ask innumerable questions to which there is no answer—what is the manner of existence—of employment—of society—of remembrance—of anticipation of all the surrounding revelations to our departed friends ? How striking to think, that *she*, so long and so recently with me here, so beloved, but now so totally withdrawn and absent, that she experimentally knows all that I am in vain inquiring !

25. *Problems of this life solved in the next.*—One object of life should be to accumulate a great number of grand questions to be asked and resolved in eternity. We now ask the sage, the genius, the philosopher, the divine—none can tell ; but we will open our series to *other respondents*—we will ask angels—God.

26. *Pagan views of a future state dim and inefficacious.*—The shadowy notion of a future state which hovered about the minds of the pagans, a vague apparition which alternately came and vanished, was at once too fantastic and too little of a serious belief

to be of any avail to preserve the rectitude, or to maintain the authority, of the distinction between right and wrong. It was not defined enough, or noble enough, or convincing enough, or of judicial application enough, either to assist the efficacy of such moral principles as might be supposed to be innate in a rational creature, and competent for prescribing to it some virtues useful and necessary to it even if its present brief existence were all ; or to enjoin effectually those higher virtues to which there can be no adequate inducement but in the expectation of a future life.

Imagine, if you can, the withdrawal of this doctrine from the faith of those who have a solemn persuasion of it as a part of revealed truth. Suppose the grand idea either wholly obliterated, or faded into a dubious trace of what it had been, or transmuted into a poetic dream of classic or barbarian mythology—and how many moral principles would be found to have vanished with it, would necessarily break up the government over his conscience.

27. *The offences of some elegant writers, in confounding the Christian's with the pagan's triumph over death.*—What is the Christian belief of that poet worth, who would not, on reflection, feel self-reproach for the affecting scene, which has, for a while, made each of his readers rather wish to die with Socrates, or with Cato, than with St. John? What would have been thought of the pupil of an apostle, who, after hearing his master describe the spirit of a Christian's departure from the world, in language which he believed to be of conclusive authority, and which asserted or clearly implied that this alone was greatness in death, should have taken the first occasion to expatiate with enthusiasm on the closing scene of a philosopher, or on the exit of a stern hero, that, acknowledging in the visible world no object for either confidence or fear, departed with the aspect

of a being who was going to summon his gods to judgment for the misfortunes of his life? And how will these careless men of genius give their account to the Judge of the world, for having virtually taught many aspiring minds that, notwithstanding his first coming was to conquer for man the king of terrors, there needs no recollection of him, in order to look toward death with noble defiance or sublime desire?

28. *Vague notions of heaven.*—The martial vagrants of Scandinavia glowed with the vivid anticipations of Valhalla; the savages of the western continent had their animating visions of the “land of souls;” the modern Christian barbarians of England, who also expect to live after death, do not know what they mean by their phrase of “going to heaven.”

29. *Grand deliverance of death.*—How obvious is it, too, that there must be a change, like that accomplished through death, in order to the enlargement of our faculties, to the extension of the sphere of their never-remitting, never-tiring exertion, to their enjoying a vivid perception of truth, in a continually expanding manifestation of it, and to their entering, sensibly and intimately, into happier and more exalted society than any that can exist on earth. Sometimes, while you are thinking of that world unseen which is now an object of your faith, but may soon be disclosed to you in its wondrous reality, it will occur to you, how many most interesting inquiries to which there is here no reply, will, to you, be changed into knowledge! how many things will be displayed to your clear and delighted apprehension, which the most powerful intellect, while yet confined in the body, conjectures and inquiries after in vain. What a mighty scene of knowledge and felicity there is, which it is necessary to die in order to enter into! Yes, to be fully, sublimely, unchangeably happy, it is necessary to die. For the soul to be redeemed to liberty and purity—to rise from darkness to the great

vision of truth—to be resumed into the presence of its Divine Original—to enter into the communion of the Mediator of the new testament and of the spirits of the just, it is necessary to die !

30. *Death the sovereign remedy for all infirmities.*

—It often occurs to meditative thought, what an instant *cure* it will be for all the disorders at once, when the frame itself is laid down, and the immortal inhabitant, abandoning it, will care no more about it; will seem to say, “Take all thy diseases with thee now into the dust; they and thou concern me no more.”

31. *State of the righteous in heaven to be desired.*

—The consequence would be that all things affecting the soul, in the way of attracting it, would affect it right. Nothing would *attract* it which ought not; it would be in *repulsion* to all evil; and those things which did attract, and justly might, would do so in the right degrees and proportion so far, and no further; with so much force, and no more; and with an unlimited force that alone which is the supreme good. What a glorious condition this! And this *must* be the state of good men in a future world, else there would be temptation, trial, hazard, and the possibility of falling. . . . How marvellous and how lamentable, that the soul can consent to stay in the dust, when invited above the stars; having in its own experience the demonstration that this is not its world; knowing that even if it were, the possession will soon cease; and having a glorious revelation and a continual loud call from above! . . . Happy! considering that to those higher things we are in a constant, permanent relation; whereas our relation to the terrestrial is varying and transient. Reflect, how many things on the earth we have been in relation to, but are no longer, and shall be no more. Happy! because a right state of the affections toward the superior objects, is the sole security for our having the greatest benefit of those on earth. For that which is the best

in the inferior, is exactly that which may contribute to the higher; and that will never be found but by him who is intent on the higher. Happy! because every step of the progress which we must make in leaving the one, is an advance toward a blessed and eternal conjunction with the other. Then, that circumstance of transcendent happiness, that in the superior state of good men there will be no contrary attractions, no diverse and opposed relations to put their choice and their souls in difficulty or peril!

32. *Future greatness of man.*—FUTURITY is the greatness of man, and that *hereafter* is the grand scene for the attainment of the fullness of his existence. When depressed and mortified by a conscious littleness of being, yet feeling emotions and intimations which seem to signify that he should not be little, he may look to futurity and exclaim, "I shall be great yonder!" When feeling how little belongs to him, how diminutive and poor his sphere of possession here, he may say, "The immense futurity is mine!" Looking at man, we seem to see a vast collection of little beginnings—attempts—failures—like a plantation on a bleak and blasted heath. And the progress in whatever is valuable and noble, whether in individuals or communities, is so miserably difficult and slow. So that "the perfectibility of man," in the sense in which that phrase has been employed, stands justly ridiculed as one of the follies of philosophic romance. Then how delightful it is to see revelation itself, pronouncing as possible, and predicting as to come, something "perfect" in the condition of man!

33. *Lofty aspirations for the future life.*—I have been reading some of Milton's amazing descriptions of spirits, of their manner of life, their powers, their boundless liberty, and the scenes which they inhabit or traverse; and my wonted enthusiasm kindled high. I almost wished for death; and wondered with great

admiration what that life and what those strange regions really are, into which death will turn the spirit free! I can not wonder, and I can easily pardon, that this intense and sublime curiosity has sometimes demolished the corporeal prison, by flinging it from a precipice, or into the sea. Milton's description of Uriel and the Sun revived the idea which I have before indulged as an imagination of sublime luxury, of committing myself to the liquid element (supposing some part of the sun a liquid fire), of rising on its swells, flashing amid its surges, darting upward a thousand leagues on the spiry point of a flame, and then falling again fearless into the fervent ocean. Oh, what is it to be dead; what is it to shoot into the expansion, and kindle into the ardors of eternity; what is it to associate with resplendent angels!

34. *Sorrows of this compensated by the joys of the future life.*—Remember, my friend, what a sublime compensation He is able to make you for all these troubles, and often read and muse on those promises in which he has engaged to make you eternally happier for the present pains. Think how completely all the griefs of this mortal life will be compensated by one age, for instance, of the felicities beyond the grave, and then think that one age multiplied ten thousand times, is not so much to eternity as one grain of sand is to the whole material universe. Think what a state it will be to be growing happier and happier still as ages pass away, and yet leave something still happier to come!

35. *Contemplation of the departed righteous.*—You can thus regard her as having passed beyond the very last of the pains and sorrows appointed to her existence by her Creator, as looking back on them *all*, and having entered on an eternity of unmingled joy; as having completed a short education for a higher sphere and a nobler society; as having attained since she was your companion, and by the act of ceasing

to be so, *that* in comparison with which the whole sublunary world is a trifle ; as having left your abode because her presence was required among the blessed and exalted servants of the supreme Lord in heaven.

36. *Death the exchange of the earthly for the heavenly treasure.*—"Paid the debt of nature." No ; it is not paying a debt—it is rather like bringing a note to a bank to obtain solid gold in exchange for it. In this case you bring this cumbrous body, which is nothing worth, and which you could not wish to retain long ; you lay it down, and receive for it from the eternal treasures—liberty, victory, knowledge, rapture.

37. *Premonitions of mortal dissolution welcomed.*—Indeed, I would regard as something better than enemies, the visitations that give a strong warning of the final and not remote beating down and demolition of the whole frail tabernacle. A salutary impression made on the soul, even through a wound of the body, is a good greatly more than compensating the evil. In the last great account no doubt a vast number of happy spirits will have to ascribe that happiness to the evils inflicted on their bodies, as the immediate instrumental cause.

38. *Joyous anticipation of the heavenly state.*—Let us gratefully hail the gleams that come to us from a better world, through the gloom of declining age, which is beginning to darken before us, and give all diligence to the preparation for passing the shades of death, confident in the all-sufficiency of Him who died for us, to emerge into the bright economy and the happy society beyond.

39. *The aged believer approaching a future life.*—An aged Christian is soothed by the assurance that his Almighty Friend will not despise the enfeebled exertions, nor desert the oppressed and fainting weakness, of the last stage of his servant's life. When advancing into the shade of death itself, he is anima-

ted by the faith that the great sacrifice has taken the malignity of death away; and that the Divine presence will attend the dark steps of this last and lonely enterprise, and show the dying traveller and combatant with evil that even this melancholy gloom is the very confine of paradise, the immediate access to the region of eternal life.

40. *Regrets of converted old age.*—When the sun thus breaks out toward the close of his gloomy day, and when, in the energy of his new life, he puts forth the best efforts of his untaught spirit for a little divine knowledge, to be a lamp to him in entering ere long the shades of death, with what bitter regret he looks back to the period when a number of human beings, some perhaps still with him, some now scattered from him, and here and there pursuing their separate courses in careless ignorance, were growing up under his roof, within his charge, but in utter estrangement from all discipline adapted to insure a happier sequel! His distressing reflection is often representing to him what they might now have been if they had grown up under such discipline. And gladly would he lay down his life to redeem for them but some inferior share of what the season for imparting to them is gone for ever.

41. *Death of the righteous and the wicked contrasted.*—It is well; but if, sweeping aside the pomp and deception of life, we could draw from the last hours and death-beds of our ancestors all the illuminations, convictions, and uncontrollable emotions, with which they have quitted it, what a far more affecting history of man should we possess! Behold all the gloomy apartments opening, in which the wicked have died; contemplate first the triumph of iniquity, and here behold their close; witness the terrific faith, the too late repentance, the prayers suffocated by despair and the mortal agonies! These once they would not believe; they refused to consider them; they could

not allow that the career of crime and pleasure was to end. But now truth, like a blazing star, darts over the mind, and but shows the way to that "darkness visible" which no light can cheer. "Dying wretch!" we say in imagination to each of these, "is religion true? Do you believe in a God, and another life, and a retribution?"—"Oh yes!" he answers, and expires. But "the righteous hath hope in his death." Contemplate through the unnumbered saints that have died, the soul, the true and inextinguishable life of man, charmed away from this globe by celestial music, and already respiring the gales of eternity! If we could assemble in one view all the adoring addresses to the Deity, all the declarations of faith in Jesus, all the gratulations of conscience, all the admonitions and benedictions to weeping friends, and all the gleams of opening glory, our souls would burn with the sentiment which made the wicked Balaam devout, and exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." These revelations of death would be the most emphatic commentary on the revelation of God.

42. *Without God in the world.*—"Without God in the world." Think what a description, and applicable to individuals without number! If it had been "without friends—without food—without shelter"—that would have had a gloomy sound; but, "*without God!*" without him!—that is, in no happy relation to him who is the very origin, support, and life, of all things; without him who can make good flow to his creatures from an infinity of sources; without him whose favor possessed is the best, the sublimest of all delights, all triumphs, all glories; without him who can confer an eternal felicity; without him, too, in a world where the human creature knows there is a mighty and continual conspiracy against his welfare. What do those, who are under so sad a destitution, value and seek instead? But what will anything or

all things be worth in his absence? We need not dwell on that condition of humanity in which there is no notion of Deity at all—the condition of some outcast savage tribes. The spirit with nothing to go out to, beyond its clay walls, but the immediately surrounding elements, and other creatures of the same order. . . . That relation constitutes the law of good and evil, and fixes an awful sanction on the difference. In an endless series of things—that there is such a Being, and that I belong to him, is a reason for one thing, and against another. The thought of him is to be associated with all these things, and its influence to be predominant. “Thus—and thus—I think—and wish—and will—and act—*because* there is a God.” Now for me to forget or disregard all this, is to remove myself, as far as I can, from God; to cause, as far as I am able, that to me there is no God. . . . To be insensible to the Divine character as lawgiver, rightful authority, and judge, is truly to be “without God in the world.” For thus every action of the soul and the life assumes that he is absent, or not exists. . . . Without him as a friend, approver, and patron; no devout, ennobling converse with him; no conscious reception of delightful impressions, sacred influences, suggested sentiments; no pouring out of the soul in fervent desires for his illuminations, his compassions, his forgiveness, his transforming operations; no earnest penitential, hopeful pleading in the name of the Great Intercessor; no solemn, affectionate dedication of the whole being. . . . Consider the *loneliness* of a human soul in this destitution. All other beings are necessarily (shall we express it so?) extraneous to the soul; they may communicate with it, but they are still separate and without it; an intermediate vacancy keeps them for ever asunder, so that the soul must be, in a sense, in an insupportable and eternal solitude—that is, as to all creatures.

43. *Presumption of delay for Divine influences.*—

When a mariner suffers a long, dead calm on the ocean, how oft he looks up at the sails, and says, "Oh, if the winds would but blow!" Now there may be persons who will aver that the thoughtful man can do no more respecting his motives than the mariner respecting the winds. We must think differently. . . . Or shall he wait quietly to see whether the good motives will grow stronger of themselves?—as we may look at a stream, and know that when the rain comes, it will be swollen to a torrent; as we may let trees alone, and see how they will enlarge. Alas! have his good motives grown while he *has* thus waited?

44. *Approving the good, but pursuing the wrong.*—Astonishing fact, that all that mankind acknowledge the greatest, they care about the least—as first, on the summit of all greatness the Deity! 'Tis acknowledged he reigns over all, is present always *here*, prevails in each atom and each star, observes us as an awful Judge, claims infinite regard, is supremely good—what then? why, think nothing at all about him!

45. *Indifference to offers of salvation.*—Here, now, the inestimable gifts of religion are carried round to four hundred people (the congregation): if it could be made visible, how many take them, and what part of them, and how much, and how many let them pass by, and *why*?

46. *Unprofited by the gospel.*—Hearing an excellent sermon—most monstrous truth, that this sermon, composed of perhaps two hundred just thoughts, will, by the evening hour, be forgotten by all the hearers except—how many? Yet *every* just thought of religion requires its counterpart in feeling and action, or does it *not*?

47. *Indecision is decision.*—Let us beware of the delusive feeling as if indifference, however prolonged, had still nothing in it of the nature of a decision; as if it were but remaining in a kind of suspension and

protracted equipoise. Are we insensible that an additional weight is falling all the while on the other side, by mere time itself which is going, particle by particle, to the wrong; by irreligious habit, which is growing stronger and stronger; and by negation, refusal, all the while, of what is claimed by the higher interest! We decide against that which we refuse to adopt: so that prolonged indifference *is* decision so far; and *indifference to the end will but be decision completed!*

48. *Without God.*—Dreadful want, if, by some vast enlargement of thought, you could comprehend the whole measure and depth of disaster contained in this exclusion (an exclusion under which, to the view of a serious mind, the resources and magnificence of the creation would sink into a mass of dust and ashes, and all the causes of joy and hope into disgust and despair), you would feel a distressing emotion at each recital of a life in which religion had no share; and you would be tempted to wish that some spirit from the other world, possessed of eloquence that might threaten to alarm the slumbers of the dead, would throw himself in the way of this one mortal, and this one more, to protest, in sentences of lightning and thunder, against the infatuation that can at once acknowledge there is a God, and be content to forego every connexion with him, but that of danger.

49. *Meet death alone.*—And it is you, you yourself, that bear the oppressive weight. Friends sympathize; but are often reminded how far their sympathy is from an actual identity with the feelings of the sufferer. She bears *alone* the languor, and pain, and agitation, of the falling tabernacle. I was most forcibly and pensively struck with this thought in seeing you last Tuesday, and still more deeply in reflection afterward. I can not express how affectingly the idea dwelt on my mind. “How *solitary* a thing is the

fatal process!" The friends who are habitually near her, or who see her at considerable intervals, are deeply interested in the suffering of their young friend, but they are not as she is—they can not place themselves in *perfect* community, can not take a *real* share in that which presses on her—can not remove any part of it from her. It is her own individual self, still, that feels the sinking of nature, that breathes with labor, that is forced to painful efforts, by day and night, to relieve the vital organs. And it is in her own sole person that she is approaching to the last act of life.

50. *Danger of procrastination.*—How dangerous to defer those momentous reformations which conscience is solemnly preaching to the heart! If they are neglected, the difficulty and indisposition are increasing every month. The mind is receding, degree after degree, from the warm and hopeful zone; till, at last, it will enter the *arctic* circle, and become fixed in relentless and eternal ice!

51. *Persuasion to religious consideration.*—Can the voice of the kindest human friend, or the voice from Heaven itself, express to you a kinder or wiser sentence, than that you should apply yourself with all earnestness to secure the true felicity—the only real and substantial felicity on earth, supposing your life should be prolonged—the supreme felicity of a better world, if the sovereign Disposer has appointed that your life shall be short? Do not allow your thoughts to recoil from the subject as too solemn, too gloomy a one. If it *were* the gloomiest in the world, if it were nothing *but* gloomy, it is yet *absolutely necessary* to be admitted, and dwelt upon in all its importance. What would be *gained*, my dear John, and oh, what may be lost, by avoiding it, turning the thoughts from it, and trying not to look at it! Will the not thinking of it make it cease to be urgently and infinitely important? Will the declining

to think of it secure the safety of the momentous interests involved in it?

52. *Presumption of expecting more efficacious means of salvation.*—But have no such visitations come to you already? What was their effect? Are you to be so much more sensible to the impressions of the next? or do you wish them to be tenfold more severe? If you *can* wish so, the interest for which you wish so must be most urgent. But if it *be* so urgent, why neglected *now*? Consider, besides, that the next severe visitation may be the last of life—may be a fatal disaster—may be a mortal illness! Or would you wait for old age? What! because it is confessedly a great *moral miracle* for a man careless *till* old age, to be awakened *then*! Or will a man profane a Christian doctrine, and say, the Spirit of God alone can be efficacious, and he must quietly wait for that? This is saying, in effect, that he will make a trial with Omnipotence, and resist as long as he can! How can he anticipate any other than a *destructive* energy from that Spirit upon him, while he is trifling with, and frustrating truth, conviction, warnings, and emotions of conscience! while he is repelling all these minor operations of that Spirit, instead of earnestly praying for the greater!

CHAPTER X.

PLACES, NATIONS, MEN, AND BOOKS.

1. *Babylon*.—There is no *modern* Babylon. It is secluded and alone in its desolation; clear of all interference with its one character as monumental of ancient time and existence. If the contemplative spectator could sojourn there alone and with a sense of safety, his mind would be taken out of the actual world, and carried away to the period of Babylon's magnificence, its multitudes, its triumphs, and the Divine denunciations of its catastrophe.

2. *Egypt*.—Egypt has monuments of antiquity surpassing all others on the globe. History can not tell when the most stupendous of them were constructed; and it would be no improbable prophecy that they are destined to remain to the end of time. Those enormous constructions, assuming to rank with nature's ancient works on the planet, and raised, as if to defy the powers of man and the elements and time to demolish them, by a generation that retired into the impenetrable darkness of antiquity when their work was done, stand on the surface in solemn relation to the subterraneous mansions of death. All the vestiges bear an aspect intensely and unalterably grave. There is inscribed on them a language which tells the inquirer that its import is not for him or the men of his times. Persons that lived thousands of years since remain in substance and form, death everlastingly embodied, as if to emblem to us the vast chasm, and the non-existence of relation, between their race and ours. A shade of mystery rests on

the whole economy to which all these objects belonged.

3. *Illustrious names*.—Sesóstris, Semiramis, Ninus, &c. These mighty names remain now only as small points, emerging a little above that ocean under which all their actions are buried. We can just descry, by the dying glimmer of ancient history, that that ocean is of *blood*!

4. *French and English*.—Met a number of men one after another. My urbanity was not up to the point of saying "Good morning," till I had passed the last of them, who had nothing to attract civility more than the others, except his being the last. If a Frenchman and an Englishman were shown a dozen persons, and under the necessity of choosing one of them to talk an hour with, the Frenchman would choose the first in the row, and the Englishman the last.

5. *Irish*.—It will be the utmost want of candor, we think, to deny that they are equal to any nation on the earth, in point of both physical and intellectual capability. A liberal system of government, and a high state of mental cultivation, would make them the Athenians of the British empire. By what mystery of iniquity, or infatuation of policy, has it come to pass, that they have been doomed to unalterable ignorance, poverty, and misery, and reminded one age after another of their dependence on a protestant power, sometimes by disdainful neglect, and sometimes by the infliction of plagues.

6. *State of Ireland*.—There is that most appalling state of Ireland. I have no degree of confidence that the ministry have even the *will* to adopt the bold, and radical, and comprehensive measures which alone could avail there. How obvious is the necessity for some imperious enactment, to compel that base, detestable landed interest, to take the burden of the poor, instead of driving them out to famish, beg, or

rob, and murder, on the highway ; or throwing them by tens of thousands on our coast, to devour the means of support to our own population. It would be a measure which would first astound, but speedily enrage, the whole selfishly base proprietary of Ireland. I have no hope that the ministry have the resolution for so mighty a stroke : and then the Irish *church*. The plain sense of the thing is, that about two thirds, or rather four fifths of it, ought to be cut down at once, and that proportion of the property applied to national uses. But the very notion of such a thing would be enough to consign — to one of the wards in St. Luke's. And what would — say, if Lord Grey dared even to whisper such a thing to him ? And yet, unless some such thing be done, it is as clear as noon-day, that Ireland will continue a horrid scene of distraction and misery ; growing, month by month, more ferociously barbarous, and to be kept down by nothing but the terror and occasional exploits of an immense standing army, at the cost, too, of this our own tax-consuming country.

7. *Addison: deficiency of his writings in religious sentiment.*—Addison's style is not sufficiently close and firm for the use of a philosopher, and as to the exquisite shades of his colors, they can perhaps never be successfully imitated. . . . The very ample scope of the spectator gave a fair opportunity for a serious writer to introduce, excepting pure science, a little of every subject connected with the condition and happiness of men. How did it happen that the stupendous circumstance of the redemption by the Messiah, of which the importance is commensurate with the whole interests of man, with the value of his immortal spirit, with the government of his Creator in this world, and with the happiness of eternity, should not have been a few times, in the long course of that work, fully and solemnly exhibited ? Why should not a few of the most peculiar of the doctrines com-

prehended in the subject have been clothed with the fascinating elegance of Addison, from whose pen many persons would have received an occasional evangelical lesson with incomparably more candor than from any professed divine?

8. *Baxter: idea of his life.*—But to say nothing of the length of time this would take, where can mortal patience be found to work out such an historical analysis? And indeed, after all, what would be the benefit of it? A boundless, endless maze, and wilderness of debatings, projectings, schemings, and dreamings, about churches, and their constitution and their government; about arrangements for union, and terms of communion; the numberless polemical notices which he thought himself called upon to take of all the petty and spiteful cavillers of his time; the hasty productions of an over-official zeal to set everybody right about every actual or possible thing; the attenuated, and infinitely multiplex argumentations, in the manner of the schoolmen, about trivial niceties in theological doctrine; and above all, the ever-renewed and fruitless toils to work out a *tertium quid* from the impossible combination of two opposite systems of theology; what, I repeat, would be the use of attempting to find or make a biographical road through this vast chaos?

9. *Blair: his style.*—The sentences appear often like a series of little independent propositions, each satisfied with its own distinct meaning, and capable of being placed in a different part of the train, without injury to any mutual connexion, or ultimate purpose, of the thoughts. The ideas relate to the subject generally, without specifically relating to one another. They all, if we may so speak, gravitate to one centre, but have no mutual attraction among themselves. . . . The consequence of this defect is, that the emphasis of the sentiment and the crisis or conclusion of the argument come nowhere; since it can not be in any

single insulated thought, and there is not mutual dependence and co-operation enough to produce any combined result. . . . The volumes might be taken more properly than any other modern book that we know, as comprising the whole commonplaces of imagery. . . . He is seldom below a respectable mediocrity, but, we are forced to admit, that he very rarely rises above it. After reading five or six sermons, we become assured that we most perfectly see the whole compass and reach of his powers, and that, if there were twenty volumes, we might read on through the whole, without ever coming to a bold conception, or a profound investigation, or a burst of genuine enthusiasm. There is not in the train of thought a succession of eminences and depressions, rising toward sublimity, and descending into familiarity.

10. *Burke, as compared with Johnson.*—I asserted the strength of Burke's mind equal to that of Johnson's; Johnson's strength is more conspicuous because it is barer. A very accomplished lady said, "Johnson's sense seems to me much clearer, much more entirely disclosed."—"Madam, it is the difference of two walks in a pleasure-ground, both equally good, and broad, and extended; but the one lies before you plain and distinct, because it is not beset with the flowers and lilacs which fringe and embower the other. I am inclined to prefer the latter." . . . Burke's sentences are pointed at the end—instinct with pungent sense to the last syllable. They are like a charioteer's whip, which not only has a long and effective lash, but cracks, and inflicts a still smarter sensation at the *end*. They are like some serpents of which I have heard it vulgarly said, their life is the fiercest in the tail.

11. *Lord Burleigh.*—He held the important station during very nearly the whole reign of Elizabeth; and we shall not allow it to constitute any impeach-

ment of either our loyalty or gallantry, that we have wished, while reading the account of his life, that he had been the monarch instead of our famous queen. It is impossible to say what share of the better part of her fame was owing to him, but we are inclined to think, that if we could make out an estimate of that reign, wanting all the good which resulted from just so much wisdom and moderation as Cecil possessed beyond any other statesman that could have been employed, and including all the evil which no other minister would have prevented, we should rifle that splendid period of more than half its honors.

12. *Chalmers: faults of style.*—No reader can be more sensible to its glow and richness of coloring, and its not unfrequent happy combinations of words; but there is no denying that it is guilty of a rhetorical march, a sonorous pomp, a “showy sameness;” a want, therefore, of simplicity and flexibility; withal, a perverse and provoking grotesqueness, a frequent descent, strikingly incongruous with the prevailing elatedness of tone, to the lowest colloquialism, and altogether an unpardonable license of strange phraseology. The number of uncouth, and fantastic, and we may fairly say barbarous phrases, that might be transcribed, is most unconscionable. Such a style needs a strong hand of reform; and the writer may be assured it contains life and soul enough to endure the most unrelenting process of correction, the most compulsory trials to change its form, without hazard of extinguishing its spirit.

13. *Lord Chatham* in his speeches did not reason; he struck, as by intuition, directly on the results of reasoning; as a cannon-shot strikes the mark without your seeing its course through the air as it moves toward its object.

14. *Coleridge: his original modes of thought, but obscure style.*—In point of theological opinion, he is become, indeed has now a number of years been, it

is said, highly orthodox. He wages victorious war with the Socinians, if they are not, which I believe they now generally are, very careful to keep the peace in his company. His mind contains an astonishing mass of all sorts of knowledge, while in his power and manner of putting it to use, he displays more of what we mean by the term genius than any mortal I ever saw or ever expected to see. . . . The eloquent Coleridge sometimes retires into a sublime mysticism of thought; he robes himself in moonlight, and moves among images of which we can not be assured for a while whether they are substantial forms of sense or fantastic visions. . . . The cast of his diction is so unusual, his trains of thought so habitually forsake the ordinary tracts, and therefore the whole composition is so liable to appear strange and obscure, that it was evident the most elaborate care, and a repeated revisal, would be indispensable in order to render so original a mode of writing sufficiently perspicuous to be in any degree popular. . . . After setting before his readers the theme, the *one* theme apparently, undertaken to be elucidated, could not, or would not, proceed in a straight-forward course of explanation, argument, and appropriate illustration from fancy; keeping in sight before him a certain ultimate object; and placing marks, as it were, of the steps and stages of the progress. . . . He always carries on his investigation at a depth, and sometimes a most profound depth, below the uppermost and most accessible stratum; and is philosophically mining among its most recondite principles of the subject, while ordinary intellectual and literary workmen, many of them barely informed of the very existence of this Spirit of the Deep, are pleasing themselves and those they draw around them, with forming to pretty shapes or commodious uses, the materials of the surface. It may be added, with some little departure from the consistency of the

metaphor, that if he endeavors to make his voice heard from this region beneath, it is apt to be listened to as a sound of dubious import, like that which fails to bring articulate words from the remote recess of a cavern, or the bottom or the deep shaft of a mine. However familiar the truths and facts to which his mind is directed, it constantly, and as if involuntarily, strikes, if we may so speak, into the invisible and the unknown of the subject: he is seeking the most retired and abstracted form in which any being can be acknowledged and realized as having an existence, or any truth can be put in a proposition. He turns all things into their ghosts, and summons us to walk with him in this region of shades—this strange world of disembodied truth and entities.

15. *Curran*.—We have long considered this distinguished counsellor as possessed of a higher genius than any one in his profession within the British empire. The most obvious difference between these two great orators is, that Curran is more versatile, rising often to sublimity, and often descending to pleasantry, and even drollery; whereas Grattan is always grave and austere. They both possess that order of intellectual powers, of which the limits can not be assigned. No conception could be so brilliant or original, that we should confidently pronounce that neither of these men could have uttered it. We regret to imagine how many admirable thoughts, which such men must have expressed in the lapse of many years, have been unrecorded, and are lost for ever. We think of these with the same feelings, with which we have often read of the beautiful or sublime occasional phenomena of nature, in past times, or remote regions, which amazed and delighted the beholders, but which we were destined never to see.

16. *Miss Edgeworth: moral faults of her writings*.
—Whether our species were intended as an exhibi-

tion for the amusement of some superior, invisible, and malignant intelligences ; or were sent here to expiate the crimes of some pre-existent state ; or were made for the purpose, as some philosophers will have it and phrase it, of *developing the faculties of the earth*, that is to say, managing its vegetable produce, extracting the wealth of its mines, and the like ; or were merely a contrivance for giving to a certain number of atoms the privilege of being, for a few years, the constituent particles of warm upright living figures ; whether they are appointed to any future state of sentiment or rational existence ; whether, if so, it is to be one fixed state, or a series of trans-migrations ; a higher or lower state than the present ; a state of retribution, or bearing no relation to moral qualities ; whether there be any Supreme Power, that presides over the succession and condition of the race, and will see to their ultimate destination—or, in short, whether there be any design, contrivance, or intelligent destination in the whole affair, or the fact be not rather, that the species, with all its present circumstances, and whatever is to become of it hereafter, is the production and sport of chance—all these questions are probably undecided in the mind of our ingenious moralist. . . . Our *first* censure is, then, that, setting up for a moral guide, our author does not pointedly state to her followers, that as it is but a very short stage she can pretend to conduct them, they had need—if they suspect they shall be obliged to go further—to be looking out, even in the very beginning of this short stage in which she accompanies them, for other guides to undertake for their safety in the remoter region. She presents herself with the air and tone of a person who would sneer or spurn at the apprehensive insinuated inquiry, whether any change or addition of guides might eventually become necessary.

But, secondly, our author's moral system—on the

hypothesis of the truth, or possible truth, of revelation—is not only infinitely deficient, as being calculated to subserve the interests of the human creatures only to so very short a distance, while yet it carefully keeps out of sight all that may be beyond; it is also—still on the same hypothesis—perniciously erroneous as far as it goes. For it teaches virtue on principles on which virtue itself will not be approved by the Supreme Governor; and it avowedly encourages some dispositions, and directly or by implication tolerates others, which in the judgment of that Governor are absolutely vicious. Pride, honor, generous impulse, calculation of temporal advantage and custom of the country, are convened along with we know not how many other grave authorities, as the components of Miss Edgeworth's moral government—the Amphictyons of her legislative assembly.

17. *Fox—Slavery.*—For ourselves, we think we never heard any man who dismissed us from the argument on a debated topic with such a feeling of satisfied and final conviction, or such a competence to tell why we were convinced. This last abomination, which had gradually lost, even on the basest part of the nation, that hold which it had for a while maintained by a delusive notion of policy, and was fast sinking under the hatred of all that could pretend to humanity or decency, was destined ultimately to fall by his hand, at a period so nearly contemporary with the end of his career, as to give the remembrance of his death somewhat of a similar advantage of association to that, by which the death of the Hebrew champion is always recollected in connexion with the fall of Dagon's temple.

18. *Andrew Fuller.*—It appears to us one of the most obvious characteristics of Mr. Fuller's mind, that he was but little sensible of the *mystery* of any subject, or of the difficulties arising in the view of its deep and remote relations—or if we may use the fashionable

term, bearings. To a certain extent, and that unquestionably a respectable one, he apprehended and reasoned with admirable clearness and force; and he could not, or would not, surmise that any thing of importance in the *rationale* of the subject extended beyond that compass: he made therefore his propositions, his deductions, his conclusions, quite in the tone of a complacent self-assurance of being perfectly master of the subject: while in fact the subject might involve wider and remoter considerations, not indeed easily reducible to the plain tangible predicaments of his rough, confined logic, but essential to a comprehensive speculation, and very possibly, of a nature to throw great dubiousness on the judgment which he had so decidedly formed, and positively pronounced, on a too contracted view of the subject. . . . In closing this note, we do not think it requisite to use many words in avowal of our high estimate of the intellect and the general energy of mind of the distinguished and lamented divine: who, indeed, has any *other* estimate?

19. *Grattan*.—These passages tend to confirm the general idea entertained of Mr. Grattan's eloquence, as distinguished by fire, sublimity, and an immense reach of thought. . . . His eloquence must, in its earliest stage of public display, have evinced itself as the flame and impetus of mighty genius. The man would infallibly be recognised as of the race of the intellectual Incas, the children of the sun.

20. *Robert Hall*.—I was two or three times in Hall's company, and heard him preach once; I am any one's rival in admiring him. In some remarkable manner, everything about him, all he does or says, is *instinct with power*. Jupiter seems to emanate in his attitude, gesture, look, and tone of voice. Even a common sentence, when he utters one, seems to tell how much more he can do. His intellect is peculiarly potential, and his imagination robes, with-

out obscuring, the colossal form of his mind. His mind seems of an order fit with respect to its intellectual powers to go directly among a superior rank of intelligences in some other world, with very little requisite addition of force. . . . "That memory," he said, "will never vanish from the minds of those who have heard his preaching, and frequently his conversation, during the five years that he has been resident here. As a preacher his like or equal will come no more."—"The chasm he has left can never be filled. The thing to be deplored is, that he did not fill a space which he was beyond all men qualified to occupy in our religious literature. It is with deep regret one thinks what an inestimable possession for our more cultivated, and our rising intelligent young people, would have been some six or ten volumes of his sermons.

21. *Harris: his style.*—If I might venture any hint on a lower key, it would perhaps be—a tendency to diffuseness, or call it amplification, exuberance. The writer luxuriates in his opulence, sometimes diluting a little the effect which a little more brevity and compression might have sooner and more simply produced. Not that if I were asked to note any parts or passages better omitted, I should know where to point; it is all to the purpose; only I may fancy that a somewhat less multifarious assemblage of ideas would converge more pointedly to that purpose.

22. *Howard: philanthropy his master passion.*—The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermitted, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of anything like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an

intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds: as a great river, in its customary state, is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent.

The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument, or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity, was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings toward the main object. The importance of this object—held his faculties in a state of excitement which was too rigid to be affected by lighter interests. . . . His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that even at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness as if it had been nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labor and enterprise by which he was to reach it. It was so conspicuous before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every movement and every day was an approximation.

23. *Horne Tooke*.—His courage, which was of the coolest and firmest kind, shrunk from no hazard; his resources of argument and declamation were inexhaustible; his personal applications had every diversity of address and persuasion. . . . Probably no man ever did, on the strength of what he possessed in his mere person, and in the destitution of all advantages of birth, wealth, station, or connexions, maintain, with such perfect and easy uniformity, so challenging and peremptory a manner toward great and pretend-

ing folks of all sorts. . . . He had a constitutional courage hardly ever surpassed, a perfect command of his temper, all the warlike furniture and efficiency of prompt and extreme acuteness, satiric wit in all its kinds and degrees, from gay banter to the most deadly mordacity—and all this sustained by inexhaustible knowledge, and indefinitely reinforced, as his life advanced, by victorious exertion in many trying situations. . . . Toward the conclusion of his life, he made calm and frequent references to his death, but not a word is here recorded expressive of anticipations beyond it. The unavoidable inference from the whole of these melancholy memorials is, that he reckoned on the impunity of eternal sleep. . . . A thoughtful, religious reader will accompany him with a sentiment of deep melancholy, to behold so keen, and strong, and perverted a spirit, triumphant in its own delusions, fearlessly passing into the unknown world.

24. *Johnson : elevated moral tone of his writings.*—Johnson is to be ranked among the greatest of moral philosophers, is less at variance with the principles which appear to be displayed in the New Testament, than almost any other distinguished writer of either of these classes. But few of his speculations, comparatively, tend to beguile the reader and admirer into that spirit which, on turning to the instructions of Jesus Christ and his apostles, would feel estrangement or disgust; and he has more explicit and solemn references to the grand purpose of human life, to a future judgment, and to eternity, than almost any other of our elegant moralists has had the piety or the courage to make. . . . No writer ever more completely exposed and blasted the folly and vanity of the greatest number of human pursuits. The visage of Medusa, could not have darted a more fatal glance against the tribe of gay triflers, the competitors of ambition, the proud possessors of wealth,

or the men who consume their life in useless speculations.

25. *Thomas More: his distinguished and blameless character.*—A statesman and courtier who was perfectly free from all ambition, from the beginning of his career to the end; who was brought into office and power by little less than compulsion; who met general flattery and admiration with a calm indifference, and an invariable perception of their vanity; who amid the caresses of a monarch, longed to be with his children; who was the most brilliant and vivacious man in every society he entered into, and yet was more fond of retirement than other statesmen were anxious for public glare; who displayed a real and cordial hilarity on descending from official eminence to privacy and comparative poverty; who made all other concerns secondary to devotion; and who, with the softest temper and mildest manners, had an inflexibility of principle which never at any moment knew how to hesitate between a sacrifice of conscience and of life. The mind rests on this character with a fascination which most rarely seizes it in passing over the whole surface of history. After enduring with unalterable patience and cheerfulness the severities of a year's imprisonment in the Tower, he was brought to trial, condemned with the unhesitating haste which always distinguishes the creatures employed by a tyrant to effect his revenge by some mockery of law, and with the same haste consigned to execution. Imagination can not represent a scene more affecting than the interview of More with his favorite daughter, nor a character of more elevation, or even more novelty, than that most singular vivacity with which, in the hour of death, he crowned the calm fortitude which he had maintained through the whole of the last melancholy year of his life. Thus one of the noblest beings in the whole world was made a victim to the malice of a remorse-

less crowned savage, whom it is the infamy of the age and nation to have suffered to reign or to live.

26. *Pope: religious character of his writings.*—No reader can admire more than I the discriminate thought, the finished execution, and the galaxy of poetical felicities, by which Pope's writings are distinguished. But I can not refuse to perceive that almost every allusion in his lighter works to the names, the facts, and the topics, that peculiarly belong to the religion of Christ, is in a style and spirit of profane banter; and that, in most of his graver ones, where he meant to be dignified, he took the utmost care to divest his thoughts of all the mean vulgarity of Christian associations. "Off, ye profane!" might seem to have been his address to all evangelical ideas, when he began his "Essay on Man;" and they were obedient, and fled; for if you detach the detail and illustrations, so as to lay bare the outline and general principles of the work, it will stand confessed an elaborate attempt to redeem the whole theory of the condition and interests of men, both in life and death, from all the explanations imposed on it by an unphilosophical revelation from Heaven. And in the happy riddance of this despised though celestial light, it exhibits a sort of moonlight vision, of thin, impalpable abstractions, at which a speculatist may gaze, with a dubious wonder whether they are realities or phantoms; but which a practical man will in vain try to seize and turn to account, and which an evangelical man will disdain to accept in substitution for those applicable and affecting forms of truth with which his religion has made him conversant.

27. *Shakspeare* had perceptions of every kind; he could think *every* way. His mind might be compared to that monster the prophet saw in his vision, which *had eyes all over*.

28. *Jeremy Taylor.*—From the little I have yet read, I am strongly inclined to think this said Jeremy

is the most *completely* eloquent writer in our language. There is a most manly and graceful ease and freedom in his composition, while a strong intellect is working logically through every paragraph, while all manner of beautiful images continually fall in as by felicitous accident.

29. *Formidable extent of literature* almost discourages enthusiastic pursuit. Men of ordinary literary hardihood look over the dusty and solemn ranks of learned works in a great public library as an invincible *terra incognita*; they gaze on the lettered latitude and altitude as they would on the inaccessible shore of some great island bounded on all sides with a rocky precipice.

30. *Understanding the true basis of mental excellence and sound literature.*—Every thinker, writer, and speaker, ought to be apprized that understanding is the basis of all mental excellence, and that none of the faculties projecting *beyond* this basis can be either firm or graceful. A mind may have great dignity and power, whose *basis* of judgment, to carry on the figure, is broader than the other faculties that form the superstructure: thus a man whose memory is less than his understanding, and his imagination less than his memory, and his wit none at all, may be an extremely respectable, able man—as a pyramid is sufficiently graceful and infinitely strong; but not so a man whose memory or fancy is the widest faculty, and then his judgment more confined. Not but that a man may have a powerful understanding while he has a still more powerful imagination; but he would be a much superior man to what he is now, if his understanding could be extended to the dimensions of his fancy, and his fancy reduced to the dimensions of his present understanding—the faculties thus changing places. In eloquence, and even in poetry, which seems so much the lawful province of imagination, should imagination be ever so warm and redundant.

yet unless a sound, discriminating judgment likewise appear, it is not true poetry; no more than it would be painting if a man took the colors and brush of a painter, and stained the paper or canvass with mere patches of color. I can thus exhibit colors as well as he, but I can not produce his forms, to which his colors are quite secondary. Images are to sense what colors are to design. The productions of intellect and fancy combined are to those of good intellect alone, what a picture is to a drawing: each must have correct form, proportions, light and shade, &c.; with these alone the drawing may be pleasing and striking—at least it will do; the picture having both these recommendations, and the richness of colors in addition, is much more beautiful and like reality—but the drawing is preferable to a square mile of mere colors.

31. *Effect of reading a transcendent dramatic work.*
—I never was so fiercely carried off by Pegasus before; the fellow neighed as he ascended.

32. *Commonplace thoughts can not arrest attention.*
—Many things may descend from *the sky of truth* without deeply striking and interesting men; as from the sky of clouds, rain, snow, &c., may descend without exciting ardent attention: it must be large hailstones, the sound of thunder, torrent-rain, and the lightning-flash; analogous to these must be the ideas and propositions which strike men's minds.

33. *Importance of consistency in fictitious writing.*
—One important rule belongs to the composition of a fiction, which I suppose the writers of fiction seldom think of, viz., never to fabricate or introduce a character to whom greater talents or wisdom is attributed than the author himself possesses; if he does, how shall this character be sustained? By what means should my own fictitious personage think or talk better than myself? The author may indeed describe his hero, and say that his Edward, or his Henry, or

his Francis, is distinguished by genius, acuteness, profundity and comprehension of intellect, originality and pathos of sentiment, magical fancy, and everything else; this is all very soon done. But if this Henry, or Edward, or Clement, or whatever else it is, is to talk before us, then, unless the author himself has all these high qualities of mind, he can not, like a ventriloquist, make them speak in the person of his hero. There will thus be a miserable discrepancy between what his hero was at his introduction described to be, and what he proves himself to be when he opens his mouth. We may easily imagine, then, how qualified the greatest number of novel-writers are for devising thought, speech, and action, for heroes, sages, philosophers, geniuses, wits, &c.! Yet this is what they all can do!

34. *Conversational disquisition on novels.*—I have often maintained that fiction may be much more instructive than real history. I think so still; but viewing the vast rout of novels as they are, I do think they do incalculable mischief. I wish we could collect them all together, and make one vast fire of them; I should exult to see the smoke of them ascend like that of Sodom and Gomorrah: the judgment would be as just."

35. *Great deficiency of what may be called conclusive writing and speaking.*—How seldom we feel at the end of the paragraph or discourse that something is settled and done! It lets our habit of thinking and feeling just be as it was. It rather carries on a parallel to the line of the mind, at a peaceful distance, than fires down a tangent to smite across it. We are not compelled to say with ourselves emphatically, "Yes, it is so! it must be so; that is decided to all eternity!" The subject in question is still left afloat, and you find in your mind no new impulse to action, and no clearer view of the end at which your action should aim. I want the speaker or writer ever and anon, as

he ends a series of paragraphs, to settle some point irrevocably with a *vigorous knock* of persuasive decision, like an auctioneer, who with a rap of his hammer says, "There! that's yours; I've done with it; now for the next."

36. *Commonplace preachers*.—It is strange to observe how some men, whose *business* is thought and truth, acquire no enlargement, accession, or novelty of ideas, from the course of many years, and a wide scope of experience. It might seem as if they had slept the last twenty years, and now awaked with exactly the same intellectual stock which they had before they began the nap.

37. *A class of writings as void of merit as of literary faults*.—There is another large class of Christian books, which bear the marks of learning, correctness, and a disciplined understanding; and by a general propriety leave but little to be censured; but which display no invention, no prominence of thought, nor living vigor of expression: all is flat and dry as a plain of sand. It is perhaps the thousandth iteration of commonplaces, the listless attention to which is hardly an action of the mind: you seem to understand it all, and mechanically assent while you are thinking of something else. Though the author has a rich, immeasurable field of possible varieties of reflection and illustration around him, he seems doomed to tread over again the narrow space of ground long since trodden to dust, and in all his movements appears clothed in sheets of lead. . . . But unfortunately, they forgot that eloquence resides essentially in the thought, and that no words can make that eloquent which will not be so in the plainest that could fully express the sense.

38. *Remark on being requested to translate Buchanan's incomparable Latin Ode to May*.—It would be like the attempt to paint a sun-setting cloud-scene.

39. *Commonplace truth* is of no use, as it makes

no impression; it is no more instruction than wind is music. The truth must take a particular bearing, as the wind must pass through tubes, to be anything worth.

40. *The greatest excellence of writing.*—Of all the kinds of writing and discourse, that appears to me incomparably the best which is distinguished by grand masses and prominent bulks; which stand out in magnitude from the tame groundwork, and impel the mind by a succession of separate, strong impulses, rather than a continuity of equable sentiment. One has read and heard very sensible discourses, which resembled a plain, handsome brick wall: all looks very well, 'tis regularly built, high, &c., but 'tis all alike; it is flat; you go on and on, and notice no one part more than another; each individual brick is nothing, and you pass along, and soon forget utterly the wall itself. Give me, on the contrary, a style of writing and discourse that shall resemble a wall that has the striking irregularity of pilasters, pictures, niches, and statues.

41. *Inferior religious books.*—It is true enough that on every other subject, on which a multitude of books have been written, there must have been many which in a literary sense were bad. But I can not help thinking that the number coming under this description bear a larger proportion to the excellent ones in the religious department than in any other. One chief cause of this has been, the mistake by which many good men professionally employed in religion have deemed their respectable mental competence to the office of public speaking the proof of an equal competence to a work, which is subjected to much severer literary and intellectual laws.

42. *The common of literature.*—How large a portion of the material that books are made of, is destitute of any peculiar distinction! "It has," as Pope said of women, just "no character at all." An ac-

cumulation of sentences and pages of vulgar truisms and candle-light sense, which any one was competent to write, and which no one is interested in reading, or cares to remember, or could remember if he cared. This is the *common* of literature—of space wide enough, of indifferent production, and open to all. The pages of some authors, on the contrary, give one the idea of enclosed gardens and orchards, and one says—"Ha! that is the man's own."

43. *The class of books that should be read.*—A man of ability, for the chief of his reading, should select such works as he feels beyond his own power to have produced. What can other books do for him but waste his time and augment his vanity?

44. *Waste of time in reading inferior books.*—Why should a man, except for some special reason, read a very inferior book, at the very time that he might be reading one of the highest order?

45. *Ancient metaphysics.*—The only attraction of abstract speculations is in their truth; and therefore when the persuasion of their truth is gone, all their influence is extinct. That which could please the imagination or interest the affections, might in a considerable degree continue to please and interest them, though convicted of fallacy. But that which is too subtle to please the imagination, loses all its power when it is rejected by the judgment. And this is the predicament to which time has reduced the metaphysics of the old philosophers. The captivity of their systems seems almost as far withdrawn from us as the songs of their sirens, or the enchantments of Medea.

46. *The moral effect of the Iliad upon the world.*—After considering the effect which has been produced by the Iliad of Homer, I am compelled to regard it with the same sentiment as I should a knife of beautiful workmanship, which had been the instrument

used in murdering an innocent family. Recollect, as one instance, its influence on Alexander, and through him on the world.

47. *Philosophy of the demoralizing influence of literature.*—No one, I suppose, will deny that both the characters and the sentiments, which are the favorites of the poet and the historian, become the favorites also of the admiring reader; for this would be to deny the excellence of the poetry and eloquence. It is the high test and proof of genius that a writer can render his subject interesting to his readers, not merely in a general way, but in the very same manner that it interests himself. If the great works of antiquity had not this power, they would long since have ceased to charm. We could not long tolerate what revolted, while it was designed to please, our moral feelings. But if their characters and sentiments really do thus fascinate the heart, how far will this influence be coincident with the spirit and with the design of Christianity? . . . Let this susceptible youth, after having mingled and burned in imagination among heroes, whose valor and anger flame like Vesuvius, who wade in blood, trample on dying foes, and hurl defiance against earth and Heaven; let him be led into the company of Jesus Christ and his disciples, as displayed by the evangelists, with whose narrative, I will suppose, he is but slightly acquainted before. What must he, what can he do with his feelings in this transition? He will find himself flung as far as "from the centre to the utmost pole;" and one of these two opposite exhibitions of character will inevitably excite his aversion. . . . He will be incessantly called upon to worship revenge, the real divinity of the Iliad, in comparison with which the Thunderer of Olympus is but a despicable pretender to power. He will be taught that the most glorious and enviable life is that to which the greatest number of lives are made a sacrifice; and that it is noble

in a hero to prefer even a short life attended by this felicity, to a long one which should permit a longer life also to others.

49. *Antagonism to Christianity in professedly Christian literature.*—I fear it is incontrovertible, that far the greatest part of what is termed polite literature, by familiarity with which taste is refined, and the moral sentiments are in a great measure formed, is hostile to the religion of Christ; partly by introducing insensibly a certain order of opinions unconsortant, or at least not identical, with the principles of that religion; and still more by training the feelings to a habit alien from its spirit. . . . This is just as if an eloquent pagan priest had been allowed constantly to accompany our Lord in his ministry, and had divided with him the attention and interest of his disciples, counteracting, of course, as far as his efforts were successful, the doctrine and spirit of the Teacher from heaven.

50. *Responsibility of elegant writers.*—One can not close such a review of our fine writers without melancholy reflections. That cause which will raise all its zealous friends to a sublime eminence on the last and most solemn day the world has to behold, and will make them great for ever, presented its claims full in sight of each of these authors in his time. The very lowest of those claims could not be less than a conscientious solicitude to beware of everything that could in any point injure the sacred cause. This claim has been slighted by so many as have lent attraction to an order of moral sentiments greatly discordant with its principles. And so many are gone into eternity under the charge of having employed their genius, as the magicians their enchantments against Moses, to counteract the Savior of the world.

51. *Amenability of literature to a standard.*—Every work ought to have so far a specific object, that we can form some notion what materials are properly

or improperly introduced, and within what compass the whole should be contained. Those works that disdain to recognise any standard of prescription according to which books are appointed to be made, may fairly be regarded as outlaws of literature, which every prowling reviewer has a right to fall upon wherever he finds them.

52. *Naturalness of characters no excuse for their depravity.*—It is no justification to say that such instances have been known, and therefore such representations but imitate reality; for if the laws of criticism do not enjoin, in works of genius, a careful adaptation of all examples and sentiments to the purest moral purpose, as a far higher duty than the study of resemblance to the actual world, the laws of piety most certainly do. Let the men who have so much literary conscience about this verisimilitude, content themselves with the office of mere historians, and then they may relate without guilt, if the relation be simple and unvarnished, all the facts and speeches of depraved greatness within the memory of the world. But when they choose the higher office of inventing and combining, they are accountable for all the consequences. They create a new person, and, in sending him into society, they can choose whether his example shall tend to improve or to pervert the minds that will be compelled to admire him.

53. *Elegant writers often confound Christian and pagan doctrines.*—You would have supposed that these writers had heard of one Jesus Christ, as they had heard of one Confucius, as a teacher whose instructions are admitted to contain many excellent things, and to whose system a liberal mind will occasionally advert, well pleased to see China, Greece, and Judea, as well as England, producing their philosophers, of various degrees and modes of illumination, for the honor of their respective countries and

periods, and for the concurrent promotion of human intelligence.

54. *The good men of elegant writers less than Christians.*—One thing extremely obvious to remark is, that the *good man*, the man of virtue, who is of necessity constantly presented to view in the volumes of these writers, is not a Christian. His character could have been formed, though the Christian revelation had never been opened on the earth, or though all the copies of the New Testament had perished ages since; and it might have appeared admirable, but not peculiar.

55. *Elegant writers restrict their views too much to this life.*—Their schemes of happiness, though formed for beings at once immortal and departing, include little which avowedly relates to that world to which they are removing, nor reach beyond the period at which they will properly but begin to live. They endeavor to raise the groves of an earthly paradise, to shade from sight that vista which opens to the distance of eternity.

56. *Defective views of the future state in popular writers.*—The pleaders of them seem more concerned to convey the dying man in peace and silence out of the world, than to conduct him to the celestial felicity. Let us but see him embarked on his unknown voyage in fair weather, and we are not accountable for what he may meet, or where he may be carried, when he is gone out of sight. They seldom present a lively view of the distant happiness, especially in any of those images in which the Christian revelation has intimated its nature. In which of these books, and by which of the real or fictitious characters whose last hours and thoughts they sometimes display, will you find, in terms or in spirit, the apostolic sentiments adopted—"To depart and be with Christ is far better"—"Willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord?"

57. *Unfaithfulness of elegant authors to the Chris-*

tian standard.—No one can be so absurd as to represent the notions which pervade the works of polite literature as totally, and at all points, opposite to the principles of Christianity; what I am asserting is, that in some important points they are substantially and essentially different, and that in others they disown the Christian modification.

58. *Fine writers present fictitious or corrupting incidents and aspects of society.*—If it be said that such works stand on the same ground, except as to the reality or accuracy of the facts, with an eloquent history, which simply exhibits the actions and characters, I deny the assertion. The actions and characters are presented in a manner which prevents their just impression, and empowers them to make an opposite one. A transforming magic of genius displays a number of atrocious savages in a hideous slaughter-house of men, as demigods in a temple of glory. No doubt an eloquent history might be so written as to give the same aspect to such men, and such operations; but that history would deserve to be committed to the flames. A history that should present a perfect display of human misery and slaughter, would incite no one, that had not attained the last possibility of depravation, to imitate the principal actors. It would give the same feeling as the sight of a field of dead and dying men after a battle is over.

59. *Discrepancy between pagan and Christian virtue overlooked by fine writers.*—And why do I deem the admiration of this noble display of moral excellence pernicious to these reflective minds, in relation to the religion of Christ? For the simplest possible reason: because the principles of that excellence are not identical with the principles of this religion; as I believe every serious and self-observant man, who has been attentive to them both, will have verified in his own experience. He has felt the animation which pervaded his soul, in musing on the virtues, the sen-

timents, and the great actions, of these dignified men, suddenly expiring, when he has attempted to prolong or transfer it to the virtues, sentiments, and actions, of the apostles of Jesus Christ. He finds this amphibious devotion impossible.

60. *Pagan distinctions in morals confounded with the Christian by elegant authors.*—It might have been presumed that all principles which the new dispensation rendered obsolete, or declared or implied to be wrong, should no more be regarded as belonging to the system of principles to be henceforward received and taught, than dead bodies in their graves belong to the race of living men. To retain or recall them would, therefore, be as offensive to the judgment, as to take up these bodies and place them in the paths of men would be offensive to the senses; and as absurd as the practice of the ancient Egyptians, who carried their embalmed ancestors to their festivals. It might have been supposed that whatever Christianity had actually substituted, abolished, or supplied, would therefore be practically regarded by these believers of it as substituted, abolished, or supplied; and that they would, in all their writings, be at least as careful of their fidelity in this great article, as a man who adopts the Newtonian philosophy would be certain to exclude from his scientific discourse all ideas that seriously implied the Ptolemaic or Tycho-nic system to be true.

61. *Profane divorcement of literature from religion by popular writers.*—After a comparatively small number of names and books are excepted, what are called the British classics, with the addition of very many works of great literary merit that have not quite attained that rank, present an immense vacancy of Christianized sentiment. The authors do not exhibit the signs of having ever deeply studied Christianity, or of retaining any discriminative and serious impression of it. Whatever has strongly occupied a

man's attention, affected his feelings, and filled his mind with ideas, will even unintentionally show itself in the train and cast of his discourse: these writers do not in this manner betray that their faculties have been occupied and interested by the special views unfolded in the evangelic dispensation. Of their being solemnly conversant with these views, you discover no notices analogous, for instance, to those which appear in the writing or discourse of a man, who has lately passed some time amid the wonders of Rome or Egypt, and who shows you, by almost unconscious allusions and images occurring in his language even on other subjects, how profoundly he has been interested in contemplating triumphal arches, temples, pyramids, and tombs. Their minds are not naturalized, if I may so speak, to the images and scenery of the kingdom of Christ, or to that kind of light which the gospel throws on all objects. They are somewhat like the inhabitants of those towns within the vast salt-mines of Poland, who, beholding every object in their region by the light of lamps and candles only, have in their conversation no expressions describing things in such aspects as never appear but under the lights of heaven.

62. *True connexion of religion and literature overlooked by popular authors.*—Christian principles have something in their nature which has a relation with something in the nature of almost all serious subjects. Their being extended to those subjects, therefore, is not an arbitrary and forced application of them; it is merely permitting their cognizance and interfusion in whatever is essentially of a common nature with them. It must be evident in a moment that the most general doctrines of Christianity, such as those of a future judgment, and immortality, if believed to be true, have a direct relation with everything that can be comprehended within the widest range of moral speculation and sentiment. It will also be found that the

more particular doctrines, such as those of the moral depravity of our nature, an atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ, the interference of a special Divine influence in renewing the human mind, and educating it for a future state, together with all the inferences, conditions, and motives, resulting from them, can not be admitted and religiously regarded, without combining themselves, in numberless instances, with a man's ideas on moral subjects. I mean, that it is in their very nature thus to interfere and find out a relation with these ideas, even if there were no Divine requirement that they should. That writer must, therefore, have retired beyond the limits of an immense field of important and most interesting speculations, must indeed have retired beyond the limits of *all* the speculation most important to man, who can say that nothing in the religion of Christ bears, in any manner, on any part of his subject any more than if he were a philosopher of Satan. . . . Consider how small a portion of the serious subjects of thought can be detached from all connexion with the religion of Christ, without narrowing the scope to which he meant it to extend, and repelling its intervention where he intended it to intervene. The book which unfolds it has exaggerated its comprehensiveness, and the first distinguished Christian had a delusive view of it, if it does not actually claim to mingle its principles with the whole system of moral ideas, so as to impart to them a specific character: in the same manner as the element of fire, interfused through the various forms and combinations of other elements, produces throughout them, even when latent, a certain important modification, which they would instantly lose, and therefore lose their perfect condition by its exclusion.

CHAPTER XI.

PASSION, AFFECTION, SENSIBILITY, AND SENTIMENT.

1. *Conversation on cruelty*, and the cruel sports particularly among children and very young persons. Is not the pleasure of feeling and exhibiting power over other things, a principal part of the gratification of cruelty?

2. *Poor horse!* to draw both your load and your driver: so it is; those that have power to impose burdens, have power and will to impose their vile selves in addition. *En passant*, reflections here; how different is this one fact to me and to the horse I this moment looked at; I think—the horse feels; I am turning a sentence, the horse pants in suffering; how languid a feeling is that of sympathy! Nothing mortifies me more than that defect of the vitality of sympathy, with which I am for ever compelled to tax myself.

3. *Figurative use of ludicrous associations depraving.*—It is a great sin against moral taste to mention ludicrously, or for ludicrous comparison, circumstances in the animal world which are painful or distressing to the animals that are in them. The simile, "Like a toad under a harrow," has been introduced in a way to excite a smile at the kind of human distress described, and perhaps that human distress might be truly ludicrous, for many such distresses there are among human beings; but then we should never assume as a parallel a circumstance of distress in an-

other subject which is serious and real. The sufferings of the brute creation are to me much more sacred from ridicule or gayety than those of men, because they never spring from fantastic passions and follies.

4. *Cruelty of the English.*—I stoutly maintained in a company lately, that the English are the most barbarous people in the world. I cited a number of prominent facts; among others, that *bull-baiting* was lately defended and sanctioned in the grand talisman of the national humanity and virtue—the parliament.

5. *Mrs.* ——— *'s passions are like a little whirlwind*—round and round; moving, active, but still *here*; do not carry her *forward*, away, into superior attainment.

6. *Curious process of kindling the passion,*—fear, in one's own breast, by the voluntary imagination of approaching ghosts, of the sound of murders, &c., &c. I sometimes do this to escape from apathy.

7. *Interesting disquisition on the value of continuous passion*, habitual emotion, and whether this can be created, and how long a person so feeling could live. Bonaparte can not live long.

8. *Strong imagination of lying awake in a solitary room*, and a ghost entering and sitting down in the room opposite me. What an intense feeling it would be while I reciprocated the fixed silent glare.

9. *Some people's sensibility is a mere bundle of aversions*, and you hear them display and parade it, not in recounting the things they are attached to, but in telling you how many things and persons they "can not bear."

10. *Fine sensibilities are like woodbines*, delightful luxuries of beauty to twine round a solid, upright, stem of understanding; but very poor things, if, unsustained by strength, they are left to creep along the ground.

11. *Infinite and incalculable caprices of feeling.*—

A quarter of an hour since how romantic, how enchanted with the favorite idea, how anticipative of pleasure from an expected meeting! I have advanced within two hundred yards of the place: well, while I have been looking at some trees and pool of water, the current of sentiment is changed, and I feel as if I could wish to slink away into deep and eternal solitude.

12. *Importance of having a system of exercising the affections*, friendship, marriage, philanthropy, theopathy. If not in some of these ways exercised, affections become stunted, soured, self-directed.—Old maids.

13. *Captious feelings incident to a devoted affection*.—My friendship for —— is attended with a painful watchfulness and susceptibility; my heart suffers a feverish alternation of cold and warmth; physically and literally sometimes a chill sensation pervades my bosom, and moves me at once to be irritated and weep. . . . *Qu.* How far a continual state of feeling like this would be propitious to happiness and to virtue? Yet how is a son of fancy and passion to content himself with that mere good-liking, which is exempt from all these pains, because it leaves the most elysian powers of the heart to sleep unmolested to the end of time? It seems tolerably evident, that such over-vitalized feelings are unfit for this world, and yet without them there can be none of that sublimity and ecstasy of the affections, which we deem so congenial to the felicities of a superior world.

14. *Sad pleasure in grief*.—What is that sentiment approaching to a sad pleasure, which a mind of profound reflection sometimes feels in a far inward incommunicable grief, though the fixed expectation of calamity, or even guilt, were its cause?

15. *Triumph over evils in word rather than deed*.—How thoughtless often is a moralist's or a preacher's enumeration of what a firm or pious mind may

bear with patience, or even complacency; as disease, pain, reduction of fortune, loss of friends, calumny, &c., for he can easily add words; alas! how oppressive is the steady anticipation only of any one of these evils!

16. *Hostile feeling mitigated to kindness by seen affliction.*—How every hostile feeling becomes mitigated into something like kindness, when its object, perhaps lately proud, assuming, unjust, is now seen oppressed into dejection by calamity. The most cruel wild beast, or more cruel man, if seen languishing in death, and raising toward us a feeble and supplicating look, would certainly move our pity. How is this? perhaps the character is not even supposed to be really changed amid the suffering that modifies its expression. Do we unconsciously take anything like a tender feeling, even for self, as a proof of some little goodness, or possibility of goodness? Is it for those beings alone that we feel nothing, who discover a hard and stupid indifference to self, and everything besides? Perhaps any sentient being, the worst existent or possible, might be in a situation to move and to justify our sympathy. What then shall we think of that theology which represents the men whom God has made most like himself, as exulting for ever and ever in the most dreadful sufferings of the larger part of those who have been their fellow-inhabitants of this world?

17. *Despair in suffering.*—I am going to wade the stream of misery, and I see an inaccessible bank before me on the other side; where I may find it accessible I do not yet know!

18. *Sorrows cleave to the heart.*—How much one wishes it possible to leave each painful feeling that accompanies one in the rock, or the tree, or the tomb that one passes; but no: tenaciously faithful, it is found to accompany still! I am gone on, past fields,

and woods, and towns, and streams, but there is a spectre here still following me !

19. *Elements of interest in conversation.*—How is it possible the conversation of *that pair* can be interesting ? Surely the great principle of continued interest in such a connexion can not be to talk always in the style of simple, direct personality, but to introduce *personality* into the *subject* ; to talk of topics so as to *involve each other's feeling*, without perpetually talking *directly at each other*.

20. *Reactive influence of kind and of vindictive acts.*—Let a man compare with each other, and also bring to the abstract scale, the sentiment which follows the performance of a kind action and that which follows a vindictive triumph ; still more if the good was done in return for evil. How much pleasure then will that man insure—yes, what a vast share of it !—whose deliberate system it is, *that his every action and speech shall be beneficent !*

21. *Undue tax upon attention of friends.*—Remember in case of illness and confinement, to cause as little trouble as possible to attendant friends ; make a great and philosophic exertion to avoid this. There is good old Mr. B. here, a worthy man, and very kind to his family, chiefly daughters, all grown up, and most of them married. He has suffered a very severe illness, which made it indispensable for some person to sit up with him all night. And though he is greatly recovered, so as in the opinion of all his friends not to need this service now, yet he has no wish to dispense with it, nor seems ever to recollect how laborious and oppressive it must be ; and will not allow other persons, even one of his other daughters, to watch with him as substitutes sometimes, to relieve the two who have borne the main weight of the service, and who, he thinks, can do it better than any one else. Strange inconsideration.

22. *Accurate judgment of the characters of friends.*

—Superlative value in connexions of friendship of love, of mutual discrimination. I can not love a person who does not recognise my individual character. It is most gratifying, even at the expense of every fault being clearly perceived, to see that in my friend's mind there is a standard, or scale of degrees, and that he exactly perceives which degree on this scale I reach to. What nonsense is sometimes inculcated on married persons and on children in regard to their parents, about being blind to their faults, at the very time, forsooth, they are to cultivate their reason to the utmost accuracy, and to apply it fully in all other instances! as if, too, this duty of blindness depended on the will! . . . All strenuous moral speculations, all high ideas of perfection, must be pursued at the expense of all human characters around us. The defects of our friends will strike us, whether we will or not, while we study the sublime theory, and strike us the more, the more distinctly we understand the theory and them. They will often force their aid on us in the form of contrast. This can not be helped; the truth and the consequent feelings must take their course.

23. *Mutual assistance in the improvement of friends.*

—What a stupendous progress in everything estimable and interesting would seem possible to be made by two tenderly associated human beings of sense and principle, in the course, say, of twelve or twenty years. Yes, most certainly; for one has been conscious of undergoing a considerable modification from associating even a month with some one or two interesting persons. Only suppose this process carried on, and how great in a few years the effect; and why is it absurd to suppose this process still carried on through successive time in domestic society?

24. *Taste for the sublime important.*—Represented strongly to a young lady the importance of a taste

for the sublime, as a most powerful ally to all moral, all religious, all dignified plans of happiness.

25. *Inappreciation of works of genius.*—Some ladies, to whose conversation I had been listening, were to take away an epic poem to read. "Why should you read an epic poem?" I said to myself; "you might as well save yourselves the trouble." How often I have been struck at observing, that no effect at all is produced, by the noblest works of genius, on the habits of thought, sentiment, and talk, of the generality of readers; their mental tone becomes no deeper, no mellower; they are not equal to a fiddle, which improves by being repeatedly played upon. I should not expect one in twenty, of even educated readers, so much as to recollect one singularly sublime, and by far the noblest part, of the poem in question: so little emotion does anything awake, even in the moment of reading; if it did, they would not forget it so soon.

26. *Incapability for conversation.*—Spent part of an hour in company with a handsome young woman and a friendly little cat. The young woman was ignorant and unsocial. I felt as if I could more easily make *society* of the *cat*. I was, however, mortified and surprised at this feeling when I noticed it. It does, however, seem to be a law of our nature, at least of mine, that unless our intercourse with a human being can be of a certain order, we had rather play awhile with an inferior animal. Similar to this is the expedient one has often had recourse to, of talking a large quantity of mixed sense and nonsense to a little child, to even an insensible infant perhaps, from finding the toil or the impossibility of holding any rational intercourse with the parents. Fortunately, in this case the parents are often as much pleased as if one were talking to them all the while.

27. *Dancing a low amusement.*—You plead that dancing, &c. are things of pleasant sensation. Yes,

you are right ; it does not reach sentiment. The line that divides the regions of sensation and sentiment is a very important one : is not dignity all on the other side of this line, that is, the region of sentiment.

28. *Inappreciation of any exhibitions of mind.*—They can hear a parson showing away in powder and ruffles—the quack doctor haranguing on diseases and pills—the veteran “shouldering his crutch, and telling how fields are won”—the barber edging his razor with his jests—the young lady giving new interest to a tender subject by the remarks which her feelings prompt—and the old wench telling a story of weddings and of witches—all with the same undisturbed tranquillity and dulness. Virtue may triumph, or wickedness blaspheme ; distress may supplicate and weep ; injured innocence may remonstrate ; industry may reprove, or gratitude may bless ; the philosopher may reason, and the idiot may rave ; what is it all to them ? The curious and the novel can not seize attention ; the grand finds no upper story above the kitchen-apartments of their minds ; the tender can not awaken torpid sensibility ; and the pathetic rebounds a league from their shielded hearts.

29. *Limitless range of moral and metaphysical truth.*—My efforts to enter into possession of the vast world of moral and metaphysical truth, are like those of a mouse attempting to gnaw through the door of a granary.

30. *Incitements of high example.*—How should a mind, capable of any intellectual or moral ambition, feel at the thought of transcendent examples of talent and achievement ? Suggested on awaking at a late hour, and instantly recollecting—“Now Bonaparte has probably been four hours employed this morning in thinking of the arrangements of the greatest empire on earth, and I——.”

31. *Different orders of talent.*—The question that leads most directly to the true estimate of a man’s

talents (I asked myself this question after having been several times in Mr. Hall's company) is this: How much of new would prove to be gained to the region of truth, by the assemblage of all that his mind has contributed? The highest order of talent is certainly the power of revelation—the power of imparting new propositions of important truth: inspiration, therefore, while it continued in a given mind, might be called the paramount talent. The second order of talent is, perhaps, the power of development—the power of disclosing the reasons and the proofs of principles, and the causes of facts. The third order of talents, is, perhaps, the power of application—the power of adapting truth to effect.

32. *Connexion of imagination and judgment.*—Long-maintained question in conversation, how far powerful imagination does always, or necessarily, imply powerful judgment too. Instances, Burns, Bloomfield, &c.

33. *The impress of genius not generally appreciated.*—The dictates of genius urging elevated principles are not admitted or understood by the generality. So I remember a man refusing a shilling quite new from the mint, every line and point of it distinct and brilliant, for “it was an odd kind of shilling, not like other shillings,” it must therefore be a bad or suspicious one.

34. *Communication of ideas to a congenial mind.*—I know the luxury of disclosing ideas to a mind who has ideas, of expatiating on some grand interest with a person who feels already all its inspiration. It is like planting a favorite flower amid a bed of still more beautiful flowers, instead of dooming it to droop or die among nettles, a fate very similar to that of aspiring sentiments when attempted to be imparted to trivial or degraded minds.

35. *Beautiful ideas transient.*—Regret that interesting ideas and feelings are the comets of the mind;

they transit off. *Qu.* What mode of making them fixed stars, and thus the mind a firmament always resplendent?

36. *Reluctance to mental exertion.*—My mind seems for ever to carry about with it five hundred weight of earth, or lead, or some other heavy and useless material, which denies it all power of continued exertion. How much I could regret, that industry and all other virtues are not, by the constitution of nature, as necessary and inevitable as the descent of water down a hill, and of all heavy bodies to the earth.

37. *An original preacher.*— — has one power beyond all you preachers I have yet heard—a power of massy fragments of originality, like pieces of rock tumbling suddenly down, and dashing into a gulf of water below.

38. *Qualifications of an orator or poet.*—In short, no orator or poet can possibly be a better orator or poet than he is a thinker.

39. *Nothing new under the sun.*—I compare life to a little wilderness, surrounded by a high, dead wall. Within this space we muse and walk in quest of the new and the happy, forgetting the insuperable limit, till, with surprise, we find ourselves stopped by the dead wall; we turn away, and muse and walk again, till, on another side, we find ourselves close against the dead wall. Whichever way we turn—still the same.

40. *A fascinating companion amidst fascinating scenes.*—Sat a little while with a fascinating woman, in a room which looked out on a beautiful rural and vernal scene, while the rays of the setting sun shone in with a mellow softness that can not be described, after spreading a very peculiar light over the grass, and being partially intercepted by some blooming orchard-trees, so as to throw on the walls of this room a most magical picture; every moment moving and changing,

and finally melting away. I compared this room in this state, contrasted with an ordinary room in an ordinary state, to the interior of a common mind, contrasted with the interior of a mind of genius. Conversation on the feelings and value of genius. Shall never forget *this* hour.

41. *No susceptibility to mental excitation.*—How many of these minds are there to whom scarcely any good can be done? They have no excitability. You are attempting to kindle a fire of stones. You must leave them as you find them, in permanent mediocrity. You waste your time if you do not employ it on materials which you can actually modify, while such can be found. I find that most people are made only for the common uses of life.

42. *Intellect without sentiment.*—They seem to have only the bare intellectual stamina of the human mind, without the addition of what is to give it life and sentiment. They give one an impression similar to that made by the leafless trees which you remember our observing in winter, admirable for the distinct exhibition of their branches and minute ramifications so clearly defined on the sky, but destitute of all the green, soft luxury of foliage which is requisite to make a perfect tree. And even the affections existing in such minds seem to have a bleak abode, somewhat like those bare, deserted nests which you have often seen in such trees.

43. *Diversity of talents.*—Divine wisdom has allotted various kinds and divisions of ability to human minds, and each ought to be content with his own when he has ascertained what, and of what dimensions it really is. Let not a poet be vexed that he is not as much adapted to mathematics as to poetry; let not an ingenious mechanic regret that he has not the powers of eloquence, sentiment, and fancy. Let each cultivate to its utmost extent his proper talent; but still remembering that one part of the

mind depends very much on the whole, and that therefore every power should receive an attentive cultivation, and that various acquisitions are necessary in order to give full effect to the one in which we may excel. To reason well, is most essential to all kinds of mental superiority. The Bible forcibly displays this division of forces, under the illustration of the human body, 1 Cor. xii.

44. *Perverted genius.*—Beings, whom our imagination represents as capable (when they possessed great external means in addition to the force of their minds) of the grandest utility, capable of vindicating each good cause which has languished in a world adverse to all goodness, and capable of intimidating the collective vices of a nation or an age—becoming themselves the very centres and volcanoes of those vices; and it is melancholy to follow them in serious thought, from this region, of which not all the powers, and difficulties, and inhabitants together, could have subdued their adamant resolution, to the Supreme Tribunal where that resolution must tremble and melt away.

45. *Moral sentiment not necessarily elevated by investigations of science.*—P—— made some most interesting observations on the moral effect of the study of natural philosophy, including astronomy. He denied, as a general effect, the tendency of even this last grand science to expand, sublime, or moralize the mind. He had talked with the famous Dr. Herschel. It was of course to suppose, *à priori*, that Herschel's studies would alternately intoxicate him with revery, almost to delirium, and carry him irresistibly away toward the throne of the Divine Majesty. P—— questioned him on the subject. Herschel told him that these effects took place in his mind in but a very small degree; much less, probably, than in the mind of a poet without any science at all. Neither a habit of pious feeling, nor any peculiar and

transcendent emotions of piety, were at all the necessary consequence.

46. *Figure of perverted use of memory.*— ——'s memory is nothing but a row of hooks to hang up grudges on.

47. *Characteristic of genius.*—One of the strongest characteristics of genius is, the power of lighting its own fire.

48. *Importance of imagination.*—Imagination, although a faculty of quite subordinate rank to intellect, is of infinite value for enlarging the field for the action of the intellect. It is a conducting and facilitating medium for intellect to expand itself through, where it may feel itself in a genial, vital element, instead of a vacuum.

CHAPTER XII.

OBSERVATIONS UPON NATURE, NATURAL OBJECTS AND
SCENES—ANALOGIES, ETC.

1. *Infinity of creation.*—It is but little to say, that the material creation is probably of such an extent that the greatest of created beings not only have never yet been able to survey it at all, but never will to all eternity. . . . If the stupendous extension of the works of God was intended and adapted to promote, in the contemplations of the highest intelligences, an indefinitely glorious though still incompetent conception of the Divine infinity, the ascertaining of the limit, the distinct perception of the finiteness, of that manifestation of power, would tend with a dreadful force to repress and annihilate that conception: and it may well be imagined that if an exalted, adoring spirit could ever in eternity find himself at that limit, the perception would inflict inconceivable horror.

2. *Unperceived extent of the universe.*—When we reflect what kind of creature it is to whose view thus much of the universe has been disclosed; that the physical organ of this very perception is of such a nature that it might, in consequence of the extinction of life, be reduced to dust within a few short days after it had admitted rays from the stars; while, as to his mental part, he is, besides his moral debasement, at the very bottom of the gradation of probably innumerable millions of intellectual races (certainly at the bottom, since a being inferior to man in intellect could not be rational) when we think of this, it will appear

utterly improbable that the portion of the universe which such a creature can take knowledge of, should be more than a very diminutive tract in the vast expansion of existence.

3. *Invisible creation around us.*—Let a reflective man, when he stands in a garden, or a meadow, or a forest, or on the margin of a pool, consider what there is within the circuit of a very few feet around him, and that, too, exposed to the light, and with no veil for concealment from his sight, but nevertheless invisible to him. It is certain that within that little space there are organized beings, each of marvellous construction, independent of the rest, and endowed with the mysterious principle of vitality, to the amount of a number which could not have been told by units if there could have been a man so employed from the time of Adam to this hour! Let him indulge for a moment the idea of such a perfect transformation of his faculties as that all this population should become visible to him, each and any individual being presented to his perception as a distinct object of which he could take the same full cognizance as he now can of the large living creatures around him. What a perfectly new world! What a stupendous crowd of sentient agents! What an utter solitude, in comparison, that world of living beings of which alone his senses had been competent to take any clear account before! And then let him consider whether it be in his power, without plunging into gross absurdity, to form any other idea of the creation and separate subsistence of these beings, than that each of them is the distinct object of the attention and the power of that one Spirit in which all things subsist. Let him, lastly, extend the view to the width of the whole terrestrial field, of our mundane system, of the universe—with the added thought how long such a creation has existed, and is to exist.

4. *Dependence on God for returning seasons.*—We

are in our places here on the surface of the earth, to wait in total dependence for Him to cause the seasons to visit our abode, as helpless and impotent as particles of dust. If the Power that brings them on were to hold them back, we could only submit, or repine—and perish! His will could strike with an instant paralysis the whole moving system of Nature. Let there be a suspension of his agency, and all would stop; or a change of it, and things would take a new and fearful course! Yet we are apt to think of the certainty of the return of the desired season in some other light than that of the certainty that God will cause it to come. With a sort of passive irreligion we allow a something, conceived as an established order of Nature, to take the place of the Author and Ruler of Nature, forgetful that all this is nothing but the continually acting power of God; and that nothing can be more absurd than the notion of God's having constituted a system to be, one moment, independent of himself.

5. *Change of spring grateful as surprising—its analogy.*—Consider next this beautiful vernal season; what a gloomy and unpromising scene and season it arises out of! It is almost like creation from chaos; like life from a state of death. If we might be allowed in a supposition so wide from probability as that a person should not know what season is to follow, while contemplating the scene, and feeling the rigors of winter, how difficult it would be for him to comprehend or believe that the darkness, dreariness, bleakness, and cold—the bare, desolate, and dead aspect of Nature could be so changed. If he could then in some kind of vision behold such a scene as that now spread over the worth—he would be disposed to say: “It can not be; this is absolutely a new creation or another world!” Might we not take an instruction from this, to correct the judgments we are prone to form of the Divine government? We are

placed within one limited scene and period of the great succession of the Divine dispensations—a dark and gloomy one—a prevalence of evil. We do not see how it can be, that so much that is offensive and grievous, should be introductory to something delightful and glorious. “Look, how fixed! how inveterate! how absolute! how unchanging! is not this a character of perpetuity!” If a better, nobler scene to follow is intimated by the spirit of prophecy, in figures analogous to the beauties of spring, it is regarded with a kind of despondency, as if prophecy were but a kind of sacred poetry; and is beheld as something to aggravate the gloom of the present, rather than to draw the mind forward in delightful hope. So we allow our judgments of the Divine government—of the mighty field of it, and of its progressive periods—to be formed very much upon an exclusive view of the limited, dark portion of his dispensations which is immediately present to us! But such judgments should be corrected by the spring blooming around us, so soon after the gloomy desolation of winter. The man that we were supposing so ignorant and incredulous, what would he now think of what he had thought then?

6. *Sublimity of a mountain.*—We behold a lofty mountain, which has been seen by so many eyes of shepherds, laborers, and fancy’s musing children, that will see it no more. While we view the towering majesty and unchangeable sedateness of its cliffs and sides, and the venerable gloom of forty centuries impressed on its brow, imparting a deeper solemnity to the sky, which sometimes darkens the summit with its clouds and thunders, the expression of our feelings is—how sublime!

7. *Sublimity of a cataract.*—We have taken our stand near a great cataract; the thundering dash, the impetuous rebound, the furious turbulence, and the murky vapor—oh, what a spectacle! sometimes, while

we have gazed, the noise and mass of waters seemed to increase every moment, threatening to involve and annihilate us. We could fancy we heard preternatural sounds—the voice of death—through the roar. It seemed as if some hideous breach had taken place of the regular order of the system, and the element were rushing from its natural state into strange combustion, as the commencement of ruin. It gives a most striking representation of omnipotent vengeance pouring on enormous guilt. We wonder almost that the stream could change the calmness with which it flowed a little while before into such dreadful tumult, and that from such dreadful tumult it could subside into calmness again.

8. *Sublimity of the sea.*—Perhaps we have seen the sea reposing in calmness. Its ample extent and glassy smoothness seeming almost to rival the sky expanded above it; its depth to us unknown; the thought that we stand near a gulf, capable in one hour of extinguishing all human life—and the thought that this vast body, now so peaceful, can move, can act with a force quite equal to its magnitude—inspire a sublime sentiment. Perhaps we have seen it in tempest, moving with a host of mountains to assault the eternal barrier which confines its power. If there were in reality spirits of the deep, it might suit them well to ride on these ridges, or howl in this raging foam. We have often seen the fury of little beings; but how insignificant in comparison of what we now behold, the world in a rage! Indeed, we could almost imagine that the great world is informed with a soul, and that these commotions express the agitations of its passions. Undoubtedly to mariners, hazarded far off in the midst of such a scene, the sublimity is lost in the danger. Horror is the sentiment with which they survey the vast flood, rolling in hideous steeps, and gulfs, and surges; while at a distance, on the gloomy limit of the view, despair is

seen to stand, summoning forward still new billows without end. But, to a spectator on the land, the influence which breathes powerfully from the scene, and which conscious danger would darken into horror, is illuminated into awful sublimity, by the perfect security of his situation.

9. *Sublimity of the sun.*—But the sun far transcends all these objects, and yet mingles no terror with the emotion of sublimity. His grandeur is expressed in that vivid fluctuation, and that profuse effulgence, which, so superior to the faintness of a merely reflective luminary, are the signs of an original, inexhaustible fire. He has the aspect of a potentate, ambitious in universal empire of nothing but the power of universal beneficence; and a stranger to the character of our part of the creation would think that must be a pure and happy world which is blest with so grand a radiance! What a pleasure to see him rise—but partially at first, as with a modest delay, till the smile which his appearance kindles over the world invites him to come forward. A certain demure coldness which a little while before gave every object a coy and solitary air, shutting up even the beauties of every flower from our sight, is changed by his full appearance into a kind of social gayety, and all things, animate and inanimate, seem to rejoice with us and around us. We view him climbing the clouds that sometimes appear on the horizon in the form of mountains, which he seems to set on fire as he climbs. In his course through the sky, he is sometimes seen shaded with clouds, as if passing under the umbrage of a great forest, and sometimes in the clear expanse, like a vast fountain of the element of which *minds* are made. From morning till evening he has the dominion of all that is grand and beautiful over the face of nature, and seems at once to make it his own, and to make it ours. His glories are augmented in his decline, as he passes down the

sky amid a wilderness of beautiful clouds, the incense of the world, collected to honor him as he retires, till at last he seems to descend into a calm sea with amber shores—leaving, however, above the horizon a mellow lustre, soft and sweet, as the memory of a departed friend. How important and dignified should that course of action be, which is lighted by such a lamp! How magnificent that system which required so great a luminary—and to what a stupendous elevation will that thought rise, which must vault over such an orb of glory, in its way to contemplate a Being still infinitely greater!

10. *Sublimity of the heavens.*—When the night is come, we may look up to the sublime tranquillity of the heavens, where the stars are seen, like nightly fires of so many companies of spirits, pursuing their inquiries over the superior realms. We know not how far the reign of disorder extends, but the stars appear to be beyond its limits; and, shining from their remote stations, give us information that the universe is wide enough for us to prosecute the experiment of existence, through thousands of stages, perhaps in far happier climes than this. Science is the rival of imagination here, and by teaching that these stars are suns, has given a new interest to the anticipation of eternity, which can supply such inexhaustible materials of intelligence and wonder. Yet these stars seem to confess that there must be still sublimer regions for the reception of spirits refined beyond the intercourse of all material lights; and even leave us to imagine that the whole material universe itself is only a place where beings are appointed to originate, and to be educated through successive scenes, till passing over its utmost bounds into the immensity beyond, they there at length find themselves in the immediate presence of the Divinity.

11. *Rising of the moon: train of reflection suggested by it.*—Have just seen the moon rise, and wish the

image to be eternal. I never beheld her in so much character, nor with so much sentiment, all these thirty years that I have lived. Emerging from a dark mountain of clouds, she appeared in a dim sky, which gave a sombre tinge to her most majestic aspect. It seemed an aspect of solemn, retiring severity, which had long forgotten to smile; the aspect of a being which had no sympathies with this world; of a being totally regardless of notice, and having long since with a gloomy dignity resigned the hope of doing any good, yet proceeding with composed, unchangeable self-determination to fulfil her destiny, and even now looking over the world at its accomplishment. (Happy part of the figure.) Felt it difficult to divest the moon of that personality and consciousness which my imagination had recognised from the first moment. With an effort, alternated the ideas of her being a mere lucid body, and of her being a conscious power, and felt the latter infinitely more interesting, and even more as if it were natural and real. Do not know how I found in the still shades, that dimmed in solemnness the lower part of her orb, the suggestion of immortality, and the wish to be a "disembodied power." Question to the silent spirits of the night: "What is your manner of feeling as you contemplate all these scenes? Are yours all ideas of absolute science, or do they swim in visionary fancy?" The apprehension of soon losing my power of *seeing* a world so superabundant of sentiment and soul, is very mournful.

12. *The farthest excursion of the imagination does not reach the limit of the universe.*—In conversation at W——'s, had a splendid revel of imagination among the stars, caused by the mention of Herschel's telescope, and some astronomical facts asserted by him. The images, like Lee's poetry, were, from a basis of excellence, flung away into extravagance. But it is a striking reflection, that when the wild dream of

imagination is past, the thing is still real: there *is* a sun; there *are* stars and systems; innumerable worlds, on which the soberest depositions of science far transcend all the visions that fancy can open to enthusiasm!

13. *Vast disparity between the grandeur of Nature and the sentiments with which it is contemplated.*—I have once more been throwing an eager gaze over the heaven of stars, with the alternate feelings of shrinking into an atom and expanding into an angel—what I but am now! what I may be hereafter! I am amazed that so transcendently awful a spectacle should seize attention so seldom, and affect the habit of thought so little. What is the most magnificent page of a heroic poem, compared with such an expanse of glorious images? It seems the grand portico into that infinity in which the incomprehensible Being resides. Oh, that this soul should have within itself so little of that amplitude and that divine splendor which deify the scene that for ever environs it! Mortifying, that my scope of existence is so little, with the feeling as if it might be so vast. The hemisphere of thought surely ought to have some analogy with the hemisphere of vision. Most mortifying, that this wondrous, boundless universe should be so little mine, either by knowledge or by assimilating influence! But this vision gives a delightful omen of what the never-dying mind may at length behold—may at last become! Oh, may I never again disobey or forget a Power whose existence pervades all yonder stars, and is their grandeur! It is indeed possible to engage his attention, and enjoy his friendship for ever! In this comparison, what becomes of the importance of our human friendships? Yet still I am man, and the social, tender sentiment at this very moment says in my heart, “There are one or two dear persons whom I can not but wish to have

for my affectionate, impassioned associates in exploring those divine regions.

14. *Grand conceit of the sun and a comet as conscious beings, encountering each other in the circuit of the heavens.*—Very grand idea, presenting the sun and a comet as conscious beings, of hostile or dubious determination toward each other. The comet, though a less orb, yet fraught with inextinguishable ardor, passes near the sun in his course, and dares to look him in the face. The aspect of fearless calmness with which the greater orb regards him. I have the image, but can not express it.—Fingal and Cathmor, &c.

15. *Description of an exquisitely soft and pensive evening.*—It is as if the soul of Eloisa pervaded all the air.

16. *Little bird in a tree.*—Bird, 'tis pity such a delicious note should be silenced by winter, death, and, above all, by annihilation. I do not and I can not believe that all these little spirits of melody are but the snuff of the grand taper of life, the mere vapor of existence, to vanish for ever.

17. *On listening to the song of a bird.*—Sweet bird ! it is a tender and entrancing note, as if breathed by the angel of love ; rather the infinite spirit of love inspires thy bosom, and thou art right while thou singest to raise those innocent little eyes to heaven !

18. *On seeing a butterfly.*—Saw a most beautiful butterfly, which I was half inclined to chase. *Qu.* Which would be the stronger excitement to such pursuit, the curiosity raised by seeing such an object for the first time, or the feeling which, as now, is a relic of the interests and amusements of early youth ?

19. *Correspondences probable between remote parts of the universe.*—One wonders in how many respects a real resemblance exists through the creation. One may doubt whether, if there be embodied inhabitants in the planets of other suns, or even in the other planets of our own system, they have forms anything like

ours. They may be square, orbicular, or of any other form. One analogy (physical analogy), however, strikes me as prevailing through every part of the universe that sight or science can reach, and that is—*fire*. The fixed stars are the remotest material existences we know of, and they certainly must be fire, like that which exists in a nearer part of the creation. This striking circumstance of similarity warrants the supposition of many more in the physical phenomena of the distant parts of the universe—and may not this physical conformity warrant the supposition of a similarity in the moral phenomena of the different regions of the creation?

20. *Looking at dark and moving clouds.*—Large masses of black cloud, following one another like a train of giants, in sullen silence, answering the azure smiles of Heaven that gleam between, with a Vulcanian frown.

21. *Observation during a visit in a rural district.*—Visit to a farmer. Has a wife and ten children. A great deal of mutual complacency between this pair. The children very pleasing. Played with several of them, particularly a delightful little boy and girl. Observed the various animals in the farm-yard. . . . Most amusing gambols of the little boy with a young dog. How soon children perceive if they are noticed. In many of their playful actions one can not tell how much is from the excitement they feel from being looked at and talked of, and how much is from the simple promptings of their own inclination. Observed a long time, in the fields, the down of thistles. Pleased in looking at the little feathery stars softly sailing through the air, and appearing bright in the beams of the setting sun. But next observed the little sportive flies, that show life and *will* in their movements. What a stupendous difference! Talked on education. The advantages of a large family. Importance of making a family

a *society*, so as to preclude the need of other companions, and adscititious animation and adventure. Absolute necessity of preventing as far as possible any communication of the children with those of the neighborhood.

22. *Development of truth from reflective observation.*—I have often noticed the process in my mind, when in the outset of a journey or day, I have set myself to observe whatever should fall within my sphere. For some time at first I can do no more than take an account of bare facts; as, there is a house; there a man; there a tree; such a speech uttered; such an incident happens, &c., &c. After some time, however, a large enginery begins to work; I feel more than a simple perception of objects; they become environed with an atmosphere, and shed forth an emanation. They come accompanied with trains of images, moral analogies, and a wide diffused, vitalized, and indefinable kind of sentimentalism. Generally, if one can compel the mind to the labor of the first part of the process, the interesting sequel will soon follow. After one has passed a few hours in this element of revelation, which presents this old world like a new vision all around, one is ashamed of so many hundred walks and days which have been vacant of observation and reflection.

23. *Varied knowledge greatly increases the interest, and instruction of daily observation.*—Power of mind and refinement of feeling being supposed equal, the number of a person's interests and classes of knowledge will have a great effect to extend or confine his sphere of observation. Was struck lately in remarking Lunell's superiority over me in this respect. In a given scene or walk, I should make original observations belonging to the general laws of taste, to fancy, sentiment, moral reflection, religion; so would he, with great success; but, in addition, he would make observations in reference to the arts, to geographical

comparison, to historical comparison, to commercial interest, to the artificial laws of elegance, to the existing institutions of society. Every new class of knowledge, then, and every new subject of interest, becomes to an observer a new sense, to notice innumerable facts and ideas, and consequently receive endless pleasurable and instructive hints, to which he had been else as insensible as a man asleep. This is like employing at once all the various modes of catching birds, instead of one only. It is another question, whether the mind's observing powers will act less advantageously in any one given direction from being diverted into so many directions.

24. *Difference between seeing and observing.*—I am not observing, I am only seeing: for the beam of my eye is not charged with thought.

25. *On observing in a moonlight walk the shadow of a great rock in a piece of water.*—Astonishing number of analogies with moral truth, strike one's imagination in wandering and musing through the scenes of nature. Or, is analogy a really existing fact, or merely an illusive creation of the mind within itself? Suggested in a moonlight walk, by observing a great rock reflected downward as far as its height upward, in a still piece of water at its foot, and by comparing this deception to that delusive magic of imagination which magnifies into double its proper dimensions of importance an object which is interesting.

26. *Thoughts in traversing rural scenes.*—Repeated feeling, on traversing various rural scenes, of the multitudinous, overwhelming vastness of the creation. What a world of images, suggestions, mysteries!

27. *On observation.*—The capabilities of any sphere of observation are in proportion to the force and number of the observer's faculties, studies, interests. In one given extent of space, or in one walk, one person will be struck by five objects, another by ten, another by a hundred, some by none at all.

28. *Vivifying influences of imagination.*—Fancy makes vitality where it does not find it; to it all things are alive. On this unfrequented walk even the dry leaf that is stirred by a slight breath of air across the path, seems for a moment to have its little life and its tiny purpose.

29. *Diversion from natural to artificial scenes.*—How much a traveller's attention is commonly engrossed by the works of art, houses, carriages, &c.; and how little is it directed to the endless varieties of nature.

30. *Lively fancy invests inanimate objects with life.*—In the moment of uncontrolled fancy and feeling, one attributes perceptions like one's own to even inanimate objects; for instance, that solitary tree appears to me as if regretting its desolate, individual state.

31. *Mankind acquire most of their knowledge by sensation, and very little by reflection.*—How little of our knowledge of mankind is derived from intentional accurate observation. Most of it has, unsought, found its way into the mind from the continual presentations of the objects to our unthinking view. It is a knowledge of sensation more than of reflection. Such knowledge is vague and superficial. There is no science of human nature in it. It is rather a habit of feeling than an act of intellect. It perceives obvious, palpable peculiarities; but nice distinctions, delicate shades, are invisible to it. A philosopher will study all men with as accurate observation as he would some individual on whose dispositions, opinions, or whims, he believed his fate to depend.

32. *Advantage of the close study of character.*—Very advantageous exercise to incite attentive observation and sharpen the discriminating faculty, to compel one's self to sketch the character of each person one knows.

33. *Women observe manners more than characters.*

—Some one said that women remarked characters more discriminately than men. I said, "They remark manners far more than characters." The mental force which might be compressed and pointed into a javelin, to pierce quite through a character, they splinter into little tiny darts to stick all over the features, complexion, attitude, drapery, &c. How often I have entered a room with the embarrassment of feeling that all my motions, gestures, postures, dress, &c., &c., &c., were critically appreciated, and self-complacently condemned; but at the same time with the bold consciousness that the inquisition could reach no further. I have said with myself, "My character, that is the man, laughs at you behind this veil; I may be the devil for what you can tell; and you would not perceive neither if I were an angel of light."

34. *Unusual appreciation of the beauties of nature.*

—A young lady, whose perceptions were often natural and correct without her being able to appreciate them, said to a friend of mine, "I like to walk in the country with you because you are pleased with remarking objects and talking of them. The companions I have been accustomed to would say, when I wished to do this, 'Caroline, take less notice of the fields and more of the company!!!'" This young woman, amid much puerility, would frequently express, unconscious of their value, feelings so natural and just as to be quite interesting, and sometimes even striking to a philosopher. I compared her to the African, James Albert, who, when come to England and in possession of money, would give to a beggar as it might happen, a penny or a half-guinea, unapprized of the respective value of each.

35. *Philosophizing in observation.*—"I know as well as you the folly of wandering for ever among the abstractions of philosophy, while truth's business and ours is with the real world. I am endeavoring to

learn truth from observations on facts. I am trying to take off the hide of the actual world, but it must be curried by philosophy, you will grant me, to be made fit for all the useful purposes."

36. *Effect on one's ideas from musing so much sub dio.*—A sort of vacant outline of greatness; a wideness of compass without solidity and exactness.

37. *Observing is reading the book of nature.*—"Looking at these objects is reading!" said I to myself, while beholding sheep, meads, &c. "Is not this more than reading descriptions of these things?" I had been regretting how little I had read respecting some things that can be seen.

38. *Inappreciation of the wonderful laws of nature displayed in familiar things.*—Mr. H. and I looked a considerable time with much curiosity and gratification in one of the irregularly cut pendent glasses of a lustre in which we saw the same beautiful display of colored tints and brilliancies as in the prism, only more irregular and variegated. It was not the glass toy we for a moment thought about, but the strange and beautiful vision, and those laws of nature that could produce it. A young lady present, of polished and expensive education, large fortune, and fond of personal and furniture ornaments, expressed sincerely her wonder at our childish fancy in finding anything to please us in such an object; and said she would reserve the first thing of this kind she should meet with, if no other children claimed it, for one of us. I did not fail to observe the circumstance, as supplying another instance, in addition to the ten thousand one has met with before, of persons who never saw the world around them, who are strangers to all its witcheries of beauty, and who, at the same time, indulge a ridiculous passion for the petty productions of art subserving vanity.

39. *Improvement of observation more important than its extension.*—Important reflection in opposition

to the regret of not having seen more of the world in each of its departments. "But I have seen far more of the world, that is, of event, character, and natural scenes, than I have turned into knowledge—and this alone could be the value of seeing still more."

40. *A man of ideality diffuses his life through all things around him.*—Made in conversation, but can not recollect sufficiently to write, a vivid and happy display of what may be called physiopathy, a faculty of pervading all nature with one's own being, so as to have a perception, a life, and an agency, in all things. A person of such a mind stands and gazes at a tree, for instance, till the object becomes all wonderful, and is transfigured into something visionary and ideal. He is amazed what a tree is, how it could, from a little stem which a worm might crop, rise up into that majestic size, and how it could ramify into such multitudinous extent of boughs, twigs, and leaves. Fancy climbs up from its root like ivy, and twines round and round it, and extends to its remotest shoots and trembling foliage. But this is not all; the tree soon becomes to your imagination a *conscious* being, and looks at you, and communes with you; ideas cluster on each branch, meanings emanate from every twig. Its tallness and size look conscious majesty; roaring in the wind its movements express tremendous emotion. In sunshine or soft showers it carries a gay, a tender, or a pensive character; it frowns in winter on a gloomy day. If you observe a man of this order, though his body be a small thing, invested completely with a little cloth, he expands his being in a grand circle all around him. He feels as if he grew in the grass and flowers, and groves; as if he stood on yonder distant mountain-top, conversing with clouds, or sublimely sporting among their imaged precipices, caverns, and ruins. He flows in that river, chafes in its cascades, smiles in the aqueous flowers, frisks in the fishes, and is sympathetic with every bird.

CHAPTER XIII.

MISCELLANIES.

1. *Visit to Thornbury church : reflections.*—Went to Thornbury church, in order to ascend the tower, which is very high. Walked (Hughes and I) about a while in the church. Saw one or two ancient monumental inscriptions, and looked with intense disgust, as I always do, at the stupid exhibitions of coarsely-executed heraldry. Ascended the tower. Observed both in the staircase of the tower, and on the leaden roof of the church, the initials of the names of visitants, some of whom must now have been dead a century. Reflections on the forbearance of Time, in not obliterating these memorials; on the persons who cut or drew these rude remarks, their motives for doing it, their present state in some other world; the succession of events and lives since these marks were made, &c. Waited a good while before we could open the small door which opens from the top of the staircase to the platform of the tower. Amusing play with my own mind on the momentary expectation of beholding the wide, beautiful view, though just now confined in a narrow, darkish position. Difference as to the state of the mind, as to its perceptions, between having, or not having, a little stone and mortar close around one. Came on the top. The rooks, jackdaws, or whatever they are that frequent this kind of buildings, flew away. So ere long we hope everything that belongs to the established church, at the approach of dissenters, will be off.

Admired the extensive view ; looked down on the ruins of an ancient castle in the vicinity ; frightful effect of looking directly down much lessened by the structure all around the top, of turrets, high parapet, and a slight projection just below the edge. Yet felt a sensation ; thought of this as a mode of execution for a criminal or a martyr. Endeavored to realize the state of being impelled to the edge and lifted over it. Endeavored to imagine the state of a person whose dearest friend should perhaps, in consequence of some unfortunate movement of his, fall off ; degree and nature of the feeling that would effectually prompt him to throw himself after ; morality of the act. *Qu.* Whether either of us have a friend for whom one should have thus much feeling ? Probability, from striking instances, that many mothers would do this for a child.

Examined the decaying stone-work ; thought again of the lapse of ages ; appearance of sedate indifference to all things which these ancient structures wear to my imagination, which can not see them long without personifying them. Thickets of moss on the stone. Noticed with surprise a species of vegetation on the surface of several plates of iron. Observed with an emotion of pleasure the scar of thunder on one of the turrets. Sublime and *enviable* office, if such the voice of the angels who wield the thunder and lightning. Descended from the tower, to which we shall probably ascend no more ; this partly a serious, pensive idea ; yet do not care ; what is the place, or any place, to us ? We shall live when this is reduced to dust.

2. *Precipice reflected in a deep pit : analogy.*—A picture of a precipice reflected in a deep pit, transcendently beautiful ! A small cascade from the top falling and fretting on point after point of the rocky precipice. Most beautiful aquatic green, in many recesses of the precipice nourished by this water. I

wandered and gazed here five years since. Dismal, sombre look of the farthest point of the shelving rock, visible down through the dark water of the pit. Pretty innocent dimples on the surface of this pit, caused by a gentle breath of air. Analogy—Deep villain smiles.

3. *Reflections from a surface of water : analogy.*—Most magical succession, for several miles, of reflections on the glassy surface of a canal, of the adjacent hill and wood scenery. One stripe of reflection of a distant scene, and a grand one, in a small, narrow piece of water in a field, so that this foreign piece seemed joined into the verdant field. Analogy—transient view of heaven in this common life.

4. *On seeing a halcyon.*—Felt more respect for it on account of its classic celebrity, than a common bird. But how arbitrary are these distinctions ; the bird has no dignified consciousness of superiority, and, except for its beauty, possesses none.

5. *Observed with interest the tumults occasioned in a canal,* by the sluice of the lock being opened ; but recollected what vast commotion must be caused by the rebound of Niagara, and instantly turned away.

6. *Effect of natural scenes on character.*—Hope to derive considerable influence toward simplicity and refinement from my pathetic conversations with so many charming natural scenes.

7. *Objects of affection invested with additional charms by interesting associations.*—Stood in a solitary grove, just opposite to a large cascade, on which I looked with long and fixed attention. Most interesting to observe the movements of my own mind, particularly as to the ideas which come from distant (unseen) objects and scenes. The images of several favorite persons, but particularly *one*, came around me with an aspect inconceivably delicious. Tried to ascertain how much of this charm was added to these im-

ages by the influence of the beautiful scene where they appeared to me.

8. *Field of oaks: figure*.—Most remarkable appearance of a field full of oaks cut down, disbarked and embrowned by time. Gave me forcibly the idea of an assemblage of giant monsters; or of the skeletons of a giants' field of battle.

9. *Moonbeams on the surface of a river*.—Exquisitely curious appearance of the moonshine on the rippled surface of a broad river (Thames) like an infinite multitude of little fiery gems moving and sparkling through endless confusion; or like brilliant insects sporting, all intermingled and never tired or reposing, the most vivid frisks. At a great distance the appearance is lost in an indistinct, diffused light; but they are there as busy as they are here. How busy activity can go on in the other regions of the earth, or another part of the town, without knowing or caring whether it is so here or not!

10. *On throwing large stones down a deep pit*, with apparently a great depth of water at the bottom, a dark, sullen glimmer of which the eye occasionally caught. I felt almost a shuddering sensation at the gloomy and furious sound of the water, in the impetuous commotion caused by these stones. Strongly imagined how it would be for *myself* to fall down.

11. *Lantern in a dark night*.—Interesting appearance of the tenebrious glimmer it throws on the nearest shrubs and trees; and of the thick darkness that seems to lurk and frown close behind.

12. *Entered a large cavern*, sloping down very steep, where a great number of human bones have been found. Saw a considerable quantity of them myself. This cavern was itself but lately found. It was broken into by digging away the rock. No conjecture how or when these bones came there.

13. *Drops of rain falling on a sheet of water*.—They have but the most transient effect on the water;

they make a very slight impression of the moment, and then can be discerned no more. But observe these drops of rain falling on a meadow or garden : here they have an effect to heighten every color, and feed every growth. Is not this the difference between the mind which the infinitude of sentiments and objects in this great world can never interest or alter, and that mind which feels the impression, and enriches itself with the value of them all ?

14. *Power of association.*—A lady said she remembered a remarkable and romantic hill much more distinctly now at the distance of a considerable number of years, from the impression made by a thunder-storm which happened when she was on the summit of this hill. I observed how advantageous it is to connect, if we could, some striking association with every idea or scene we wish to remember with permanent interest. This is like framing and glazing the mental picture, and will preserve it an indefinite length of time.

15. *An observant man*, in all his intercourse with society and the world, carries a pencil constantly in his hand, and, unperceived, marks on every person and thing the figure expressive of its value, and therefore instantly on meeting that person or thing again, knows what kind and degree of attention to give it. This is to make something of experience.

16. *Selfish alliances easier and stronger than benevolent ones.*—It is infinitely easier for any set of human beings to maintain a community of feeling in hostility to something else, than in benevolence toward one another ; for here no sacrifice is required of any one's self-interest. And it is certain that the subordinate portions of society have come to regard the occupants of the tracts of fertility and sunshine, the possessors of opulence, splendor, and luxury, with a deep, settled, systematic aversion ; with a disposition to contemplate in any other light than that of a calamity an

extensive downfall of the favorites of fortune, when a brooding imagination figures such a thing as possible; and with but very slight monitions from conscience of the iniquity of the most tumultuary accomplishment of such a catastrophe.

17. *Exhibition of overstrained politeness.*—We have been obliged again and again to endeavor to drive out of our imagination the idea of a meeting of friends in China, where the first mandarin bows to the floor, and then the second mandarin bows to the floor, and then the first mandarin bows again to the floor, and thus they go on till friendship is satisfied or patience tired.

18. *Worthy patrons important.*—Either Horne or Junius, we really forget which, somewhere says that if the very devil himself could be supposed to put himself in the place of advocate and vindicator of some point of justice, he ought to be, so far, supported. We can not agree to this, for the simple reason that the just cause would ultimately suffer greater injury by the dishonor it would contract, in the general estimation of mankind, from the character of its vindicator, than probably it would suffer from the wrong against which it would be vindicated.

19. *Peculiarities of the age.*—There is little danger now of men's becoming recluses, ascetics, devotees; systematically secluded from all attention to, and communication with, the active scenes of the world. For in this age men's own concerns—really and strictly their own—are becoming more implicated with the transactions of the wide, busy world. In the case of perhaps thousands of men in this country, their immediate interests—their proceedings—even their duty—are sensibly affected by what may be doing on the other side of the globe—in South America, or in Spain, Italy, Constantinople. The movements in such remote scenes send an effect like the far-extending tremulations of an earthquake, which

comes under the house, the business, the property, of men even here. . . . The pervading, connecting principle of *community*, throughout mankind, as one immense body, has become much more alive. It is becoming much more verified to *be* one body, however extended, by the quicker, stronger sensation which pervades the rest of it, from what affects any part. There is indeed much of diseased and irritable sensibility; it is as if the parts were a grievance to one another, and would quarrel; as if, like the hyena at Paris, the great animal would devour one of its own limbs. But still the great body is much more sensibly made to feel that it has its existence in all its parts. . . . Christian benevolence is now prosecuting its operations, not only with far greater activity and multiplicity of efforts, but on a far wider plan. Thus the religious interests, thoughts and discourse of private individuals, are drawn out into some connexion, almost whether they will or not, with numerous proceedings and occurrences both at home and far off.

20. *Inequalities of the race.*—Whatever you may say or fancy about the equality of the race, it needs only a little civilization to make one of them look down from a tower, and the other to look up through a grate.

21. *A malignant observation of the world.*—Attention may be exercised on the actions, characters, and events, among mankind, in the direct service of the evil passions; in the disposition of a savage beast, or an evil spirit, in a keen watchfulness to descry weakness, in order to make it a prey; in an attentive observation of mistake, ignorance, carelessness, or untoward accidents—in order to seize with remorseless selfishness, unjust advantages; in a penetrating inquisition into men's conduct and character, in order to blast them; or in lighter mood to turn them indiscriminately to ridicule. Or there may be such an

exercise in the temper of envy, jealousy, or revenge ; (or somewhat more excusably, but still mischievously), for the purpose of exalting the observer in his own estimation.

22. *Dormant elements of evil in society.*—There is a large proportion of human strength and feeling not in vital combination with the social system, but aloof from it, looking at it with “gloomy and malign regard ;” in a state progressive toward a fitness to be impelled against it with a dreadful shock, in the event of any great convulsion, that should set loose the legion of daring, desperate, and powerful spirits, to fire and lead the masses to its demolition. There have not been wanting examples to show with what fearful effect this hostility may come into action, in the crisis of the fate of the nation’s ancient system ; where this alienated portion of its own people, rushing in, have revenged upon it the neglect of their tuition ; that neglect which had abandoned them to so utter a “lack of knowledge,” that they really understood no better than to expect their own solid advantage in general havoc and disorder.

23. *An oppressed nation.*—A nation tormented, plundered, exhausted, crushed down to extreme misery under the hoofs of the whole troop of centaurs in authority.

24. *Contrasted conditions of society.*—I am sorry not to have gained the knowledge which thirty or forty shillings would have purchased in London. At the expense of so much spent in charity, a person might have visited just once eight or ten of those sad retirements in darkness in dark alleys, where, in garrets and cellars, thousands of wretched families are dying of famine and disease. It would be most painful, however, to see these miseries without the power to supply any effectual relief. At the very same time you may see a succession which seems to have no end, of splendid mansions, equipages, liveries ; you

may scent the effluvia of preparing feasts; you may hear of fortunes, levées, preferments, pensions, corporation dinners, royal hunts, &c., &c., numerous beyond the devil's own arithmetic to calculate. This whole view of society might be called the devil's *play-bill*; for surely this world might be deemed a vast theatre, in which he, as manager, conducts the endless, horrible drama of laughing and suffering, while the diabolical satyrs of power, wealth and pride, are dancing round their dying victims; a spectacle and an amusement for which the infernals will pay him liberal thanks.

25. *Imagined disclosure of the machinations and motives of rulers and courts.*—If statesmen, including ministers, popular leaders, ambassadors, &c., would publish, before they go in the triumph of virtue to the "last audit," or leave to be published after they are gone, each a frank exposition of motives, cabals, and manœuvres, it would give dignity to that blind adoration of power and rank in which mankind have always superstitiously lived, by supplying just reasons for that adoration. It would also give a new aspect to history; and perhaps might tend to a happy exorcism of that evil spirit which has never allowed nations to remain at peace.

26. *Responsibility of states.*—Assuredly there will be persons found to be summoned forth as accountable for that conduct of states which we are contemplating. Such a moral agency could not throw off its responsibility into the air, to be dissipated and lost like the black smoke of forges or volcanoes.

27. *Unworthy objects of war.*—There may occur to his view some inconsiderable island, the haunt of fatal diseases, and rendered productive by means involving the most flagrant iniquity; an iniquity which it avenges by opening a premature grave for many of his countrymen, and by being a moral corrupter of the rest. Such an infested spot, nevertheless, may

have been one of the most material objects of a widely destructive war, which has in effect sunk incalculable treasure in the sea, and in the sands, ditches, and fields of plague-infested shores ; with a dreadful sacrifice of blood, life, and all the best moral feelings and habits. Its possession, perhaps, was the chief prize and triumph of all the grand exertion, the equivalent for all the cost, misery, and crime.

28. *War : its horrors ; slight grounds.*—A certain brook or swamp in the wilderness, or a stripe of waste, or the settlement of boundaries in respect to some insignificant traffic, was difficult of adjustment between jealous, irritated, and mutually incursive neighbors ; and therefore national honor and interest equally required that war should be lighted up by land and sea, through several quarters of the globe. Or a dissension may have arisen upon the matter of some petty tax on an article of commerce ; an absolute will had been rashly signified on the claim ; pride had committed itself, and was peremptory for persisting ; and the resolution was to be prosecuted through a wide tempest of destruction protracted perhaps many years ; and only ending in the forced abandonment, by the leading power concerned, of infinitely more than war had been made in the determination not to forego ; and after an absolutely fathomless amount of every kind of cost, financial and moral, in this progress to final frustration. But there would be no end of recounting facts of this order.

However whimsical it may appear to recollect that the great business of war is slaughter ; however deplorably low-minded it may appear to regard all the splendor of fame with which war has been blazoned much in the same light as the gilding of that hideous idol to which the Mexicans sacrificed their human hecatombs ; however foolish it may be thought to make a difficulty of consenting to merge the eternal laws of morality in the policy of states ; and however

presumptuous it may seem to condemn so many privileged, and eloquent, and learned, and reverend personages, as any and every war is sure to find its advocates—it remains an obstinate fact, that there are some men of such perverted perceptions as to apprehend that revenge, rage, and cruelty, blood and fire, wounds, shrieks, groans, and death, with an infinite accompaniment of collateral crimes and miseries, are the elements of what so many besotted mortals have worshipped in every age under the title of “glorious war.” To be told that this is just the commonplace with which dull and envious moralists have always railed against martial glory, will not in the slightest degree modify their apprehension of a plain matter of fact. What signifies it whether moralists are dull, envious, and dealers in commonplace, or not? No matter who says it, nor from what motive; the fact is, that war consists of the components here enumerated, and is therefore an infernal abomination, when maintained for any object, and according to any measures, not honestly within the absolute necessities of defence. In these justifying necessities, we include the peril to which another nation with perfect innocence on its part may be exposed, from the injustice of a third power; as in the instance of the Dutch people, saved by Elizabeth from being destroyed by Spain. Now it needs not be said that wars, justifiable, on either side, on the pure principles of lawful defence, are the rarest things in history. Whole centuries all over darkened with the horrors of war may be explored from beginning to end, without perhaps finding two instances in which any one belligerent power can be pronounced to have adopted every precaution, and made every effort, concession, and sacrifice, required by Christian morality, in order to avoid war.

The laws of this institution are fundamental and absolute, forming the primary obligation on all its believers, and reducing all other rules of action to

find their place as they can, in due subordination—or to find no place at all. . . . Let an ambitious despot, or a profligate ministry, only give out the word that we must be at war with this or the other nation—and then a man who has no personal complaint against any living thing of that nation, who may not be certain it has committed any real injury against his own nation or government, nay, who possibly may be convinced by facts against which he can not shut his eyes, that his own nation or government is substantially in the wrong—then this man, under the sanction of the word *war*, may, with a conscience entirely unconcerned, immediately go and cut down human beings as he would cut down a copse!

29. *Scope and dignity of metaphysical inquiries.*—Metaphysical speculation tries to resolve all constituted things into their general elements, and those elements into the ultimate mysterious element of substance, thus leaving behind the various orders and modes of being, to contemplate being itself in its essence. It retires a while from the consideration of truth, as predicated of particular subjects, to explore those unalterable and universal relations of ideas which must be the primary principles of all truth. . . . In short, metaphysical inquiry attempts to trace things to the very first stage in which they can, even to the most penetrating intelligences, be the subjects of a thought, a doubt, or a proposition; that profoundest abstraction, where they stand on the first step of distinction and remove from nonentity, and where that one question might be put concerning them, the answer to which would leave no further question possible. And having thus abstracted and penetrated to the state of pure entity, the speculation would come back, tracing it into all its modes and relations; till at last metaphysical truth, approaching nearer and nearer to the sphere of our immediate knowledge, terminates on the confines of distinct sciences and ob-

vious realities. Now it would seem evident that this inquiry into primary truth must surpass, in point of dignity, all other speculations. If any man could carry his discoveries as far, and make his proofs as strong, in the metaphysical world, as Newton did in the physical, he would be an incomparably greater man than even Newton.

30. *All subjects resolvable into first principles.*—All subjects have first principles, toward which an acute mind feels its investigation inevitably tending, and all first principles are, if investigated to their extreme refinement, metaphysical. The tendency of thought toward the ascertaining of these first principles in every inquiry, as contrasted with a disposition to pass (though perhaps very elegantly or rhetorically) over the surface of a subject, is one of the strongest points of distinction between a vigorous intellect and a feeble one.

31. *Limits to metaphysical inquiries.*—It is also true that an acute man who will absolutely prosecute the metaphysic of every subject to the last possible extreme, with a kind of rebellion against the very laws and limits of Nature, in contempt of his senses, of experience, of the universal perceptions of mankind, and of Divine revelation, may reason himself into a vacuity where he will feel as if he were sinking out of the creation. Hume was such an example; but we might cite Locke and Reid, and some other illustrious men, who have terminated their long sweep of abstract thinking as much in the spirit of sound sense and rational belief as they began.

32. *Metaphysics a means of intellectual discipline.*—It is so evident from the nature of things, and the whole history of philosophy, that they must in a great measure fail, when extended beyond certain contracted limits, that it is less for the portion of direct metaphysical science which they can ascertain, than for their general effect on the thinking powers, that

we deem them a valuable part of intellectual discipline.

33. *Practical truths not recondite.*—The truths connected with piety and the social duties, with the means of personal happiness, and the method of securing an ulterior condition of progressive perfection and felicity, lie at the very surface of moral inquiries; like the fruits and precious stores of the vegetable kingdom, they are necessary to supply inevitable wants, and are placed, by Divine Benevolence, within the reach of the meanest individual.

34. *Mohammedanism.*—When he saw its pretended sacred book supplanting the revelation of God by a farrago of ridiculous trifles, vile legends, and viler precepts, mixed with some magnificent ideas, stolen for the base purpose from that revelation, like the holy vessels of the temple brought in to assist the debauch of Belshazzar and his lords; when he saw a detestable impostor acknowledged and almost adored in the office of supreme prophet and intercessor; this imposture enjoined in the name of God to be enforced as far as the power of its believers can reach with fire and sword; the happiness of another world promised to every sanguinary fanatic that dies in this cause, or even in any war that a Mohammedan tyrant may choose to wage; the representation of that other world accommodated to the notions and tastes of a horde of barbarians; and, as a natural and just consequence of all, the whole social economy, after the energy and zeal of conquest had evaporated, living in a vast sink of ignorance, depravity, and wretchedness.

35 *Remarkable manifestation of mind in a child.*—What a divine enchantment there is in *mind* in every age and form! I have felt it this morning with little Sarah Gibbs, a child of three or four years old, who can not yet articulate plainly, but of very extraordinary character for observation, thoughtfulness,

and grave, deep passions. I took her on my knee, played with her hands, stroked her cheek, and never felt so much interested by any child of her age. Not that she said anything scarcely; for though delighted as I knew with the attention of a person to whom she had been led to attach an idea of importance, she was serious, confused, and, as it were, self-inclosed; but I was certain that I held on my knee a being signally marked from her coevals by an ample and deep-toned nature, of which perhaps the country could not furnish a parallel. She has a strange accuracy and discrimination in her remarks, and a sort of dignity of character which is not mingled with vanity, but which puts one on terms of care with her, and makes one afraid to treat her as a child, or do or say anything which may offend her sense of character. She is affectionate to enthusiasm, but without any childish playfulness. When angry, she is not petulant, but incensed. She is loquacious often with her companions and her schoolmistress, but still it is all thought and no frisk. She is a favorite with them all. The expression of her countenance is so serious, that one might think it impossible for her to smile; Indeed, I have never seen her smile. Her parents are uncultivated people of the lower class, who have no perception of the value of such a jewel, and will probably throw it away. (Should not one be very much inclined to cite such an instance as something very like a proof that children are born with very different proportions of the *capability* of mind?)

36. *Influence of music.*—Mr. R——, who has travelled over many parts of England, Scotland, and Wales, told me he had, at one time, a wish and a project to travel over France and the rest of the continent. While musing on this favorite design, he one day entered the cathedral, at Worcester, in the time of service. Walking in the aisles, and listening to the organ which affected him very sensibly, his wish to

travel began to glow and swell in his mind into an almost overwhelming passion, which bore him irresistibly to a determination. He could not have felt more if he had seen an apparition, or heard a voice from the sky. Every idea on the subject seemed to present itself to his mind with a surprising vivid clearness and force; and he believes that from that moment nothing could have prevented his undertaking the enterprise but the commencement of the war.

This seemed to me a happy illustration and proof of what I had maintained a few days before, in a conversation on music, that it powerfully reinforces any passion which the mind is at the time indulging, or to which it is predisposed. This was maintained in opposition to several amateurs of music, who asserted that *sacred* music has a powerful tendency to produce, by its own influence, devotional feeling. They had mentioned, with strong approbation, a pair of reverend divines, who commonly make a small concert on the Sunday evening, and choose sacred music, as adapted to the day. The devotional effect of any music, except on devotional minds, was utterly denied and disproved; and it was asserted that a young man, very susceptible to the impressions of music, if inclined to vicious pleasures, would probably feel the sacred music inflame to intensity, and, at the same time, invest with a kind of vicious, seductive refinement, the propensities which would lead him from the concert to the brothel. By the same rule, a devout man, who should be strongly affected by music, would probably, if other circumstances in the situation did not counteract, feel his devotion augmented by pathetic or solemn music.

37. *Peter in prison.*—Follow him thither with compassion. Imagine him looking (if there was a sufficient glimmer of light) round on the walls of his new abode, of impregnable thickness, with strong bars, a dreary dismal shade—ominous sounds; and chains

on his limbs. "This it is," he might say, "to be an avowed and faithful servant of Him that died for me." But what if he said further, "Well I would rather be here, and be thus, for such a cause, than be the lord of Herod's or of Cæsar's palace. While the body is in a palace, the soul may be in prison; and while the body is in prison, the soul may be in a palace." "He felt no restless agitation; cast no desponding looks at the bars, the fetters, the walls, the guards; indulged in no desperate imaginations or vain explorings. He slept between two soldiers, and in his chains, and under the doom of an inexorable tyrant." "The angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison." His entrance to Peter was with no tumult, and ostentation of power. It was so calm and silent that he did not awake. The angel "smote him on the side," and summoned him to rise. But it was a gentle violence. Not so he, or some of his celestial associates, had smitten the assailants of Lot. Not so the army of Senacherib—not so he smote Herod. A gentle violence! Methinks an emblem of the death of a Christian; a soft blow to emancipate him from the prison of mortality—to summon and raise him to eternal liberty, to the amplitude of heaven. There was to be another time when Peter would want the visit of such a messenger. And there will be a time when we also shall want it; when we shall have to go out from the prison-house of mortality—and from the world itself; and shall need such a messenger to be with us, and *not* to leave us—to accompany us in an immense and amazing journey; that whereas Peter came to be delightedly and collectedly sensible of the grand intervention, when he found himself alone in the street, *we* may become sensible of the wondrous reality of it, by finding ourselves in the presence of saints and angels, and their Supreme Lord, "Peter's deliverance."

38. *Powers of language.*—*Qy.* Are the powers—

the capacity of human language limited by any other bounds than those which limit the mind's powers of conception? Is there within the possibility of human conception a certain order of ideas which no combinations of language could express? Would the English language, for example, in its strongest possible structure absolutely sink and fail under such conceptions as we may imagine a mighty spirit of the superior or nether regions to utter—so frail as not to make these ideas distinctly apparent to the human mind, supposing all the while that the mind could fully admit and comprehend these ideas, if there were any adequate vehicle to convey them? Could divine inspiration itself, without changing the structure of the mind, impart to it such ideas as no language could express? If a poet were to come into the world endowed with a genius, suppose ten times more sublime than Milton's, must he not abandon the attempt at composition in despair, from finding that language, like a feeble tool, breaks in his hand—from finding that when he attempts to pour any of his mental fluid into the vessel of language, that vessel in a moment melts or bursts; from finding, that though he is Hercules every inch, he is armed but with a distaff, and can not give his mighty strength its proportional effect without his club?

39. "*Omnis in hoc*," is the description of the only character that I can give myself to entirely. Green was very much this; a mind not only of deep tone, but always so. "*Omnis in hoc*;" yes, I want in my associate something like continuous emotion. I hate a neutral reposing state of the passions, that kind of tranquillity which is merely the absence of all pregnant sentiment. I pass some time with a friend in the high excitement of interesting, perhaps impassioned conversation; next day I revisit this friend for the sequel of this energetic season, myself glowing with the same feelings still. Well, with my friend the

enthusiasm is all gone by ; his feelings are tame and easy ; yesterday he was grave, ardent, every particle imbued with sentiment ; we became interested to the pitch of intensity ; I thought, " Let this become our habit and we shall become sublime." To-day he is in an easy, careless mood ; the heroic episode is past and over ; he is perhaps sprightly and flippant ; his voice has recovered from its tone of soul ; and he is perhaps complacently busy about some mere trifles. My heart shuts itself up and feels a painful chill ; I am glad to be gone to indulge alone my musings of regret and insulation. Women have more of this discontinuity than men. No one can be more than — interested to-day, and *degagée* to-morrow.

A man of melancholy feelings peculiarly feels this revulsion, with those who are pensive only as an occasional sentiment ; not like himself, as a habit. His associates should all be of his own character. He emphatically wants unity of character in his friend.

I have more of habitual character than you —. A person would better know where in the mental world to find me. The ascendant interest of yesterday is the ascendant interest of to-day too. It is unfortunate in character for its nobler aspects to be transient. You have not sufficiently a grand commanding principle of seriousness to pervade and harmonize the total of your habits. A love of the sublime is with you a sentiment ; with me it is a passion. In the gayety of innocence you sport at liberty, forgetful that a moral and immortal being should have all its faculties and feelings concentrated toward an important purpose. No one has given all the passion due to great objects till trivial ones have ceased to amuse him into even a temporary oblivion of them. Yes, after attention to the most solemn speculations, you can escape so completely from their fascination, so soon brighten off their interesting *sombre*, and enter into a mirthful party, and laugh with the utmost glee

and *gaieté du cœur*. Not so *I*; not so Edwin, if he were a person of real life; not so Howard; not so any one who is seized irrecoverably with a spirit of ardor till death. Yes, my friend, you let yourself be what may happen, rather than deliberately determine to be what you should, and all you can.

40. *Defence of the utilitarian theory*.—Behold, on that eminence, the temple of utility—let us approach and enter. “I see no open, regular road thither.” “True, on *this* side there *is* no regular approach; but we *can not* gain the other side, and there is a most urgent *reason* for us to come up to the holy edifice. What then? let us *open* for ourselves a way; let us cut through the tangled *fence*; let us sacrifice a beautiful shrub, or even a fruit-tree, to clear ourselves a path, rather than lose for ever an inestimable advantage.”—“But granting your principle to be abstractly just, there is this serious objection. The right application of it in cases of real life will depend on delicate conscience and enlightened calculation. It is needless to remark how few of mankind are thus qualified.”—“It is very true, and it is as if you were pointing out to travellers the way to a town, lying beyond a wide and wilderness tract of country; it passes through the intricacies of a solitary forest, and by some very dangerous spots. Two persons inquire of you the way to the town. The first is a child. You instantly direct him to go the plain great road, without so much as intimating that there *is* any other or shorter way. The other person is a man; a man of sense, with ‘his eyes about him;’ you say to him, ‘I commonly direct travellers to keep the great road, as the most certain and safe, though tedious; but I think such a man as you might venture a shorter path. Observe me carefully; having walked such a distance along the side of the hill yonder, you must turn to the right, just by an immensely large oak; then wind through the thick shade, by a path you will perceive

if you observe attentively, till you come suddenly to the edge of a great precipice; pass carefully along the edge of it till you descend into a glen; there you will observe an old wooden bridge across a deep water, a little below a cataract, the sound of which will seem to make the bridge tremble as you pass; but it trembles because it is crazy; be careful, therefore, to step softly. You must then pass by the ruins of an abbey, and advance forward over a tract of rough ground till you come, &c., &c., &c.' Thus in morals I mean to assert that in some rare instances the path of duty may lie in a more direct line to its grand object, than by the letter of specific laws; but that perhaps only the eminently conscientious and intelligent few are competent to judge when this exception takes place, and how to dispose of it properly. 'This is a curious kind of prerogative in morals in favor of your illumines.' I can not help it. I know that my principle, like every other grand principle, may be perverted to a fatal consequence, yet I can not relinquish it; for if it should ever happen (and the case *has* happened) that the letter of a moral law, owing to some extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, should stand in evident opposition to that grand utility, for the promotion of which all moral rules were appointed by the supreme Governor, it can not be a question which ought to be sacrificed."

41. *Supposition of angelic companionship*.—Delightful conversational revery on the idea of an angel living, walking, conversing with one for a month. Month of ecstatic sentiment! What profound and incurable regrets for his going away!

42. "Well, but this qualification might be attained, *if* a man would exert sufficient application."—"Ah, madam, the field of possibility is so beset round with a hedge of thorny *ifs*."

43. *Logic efficient in persuasion*.—There is an argumentative way, not only of discussing to ascertain

truth, but also of enforcing acknowledged and familiar truth.—Baxter—Law.

44. *Intellectual pursuits aided by the affections* — The successes of intellectual effort are never so great as when aided by the affections that animate social converse.

45. *All reasoning is retrospect* ; it consists in the application of facts and principles previously known. This will show the very great importance of knowledge, especially that kind which is called experience.

46. *Figure of an equable temper*.—The equanimity which a few persons preserve through the diversities of prosperous and adverse life, reminds me of certain aquatic plants which spread their tops on the surface of the water, and with wonderful elasticity keep the surface still, if the water swells or if it falls.

47. *Adversity* ! thou thistle of life, thou too art crowned ; first with a flower, then with down.

48. *A man of genius* may sometimes suffer a miserable sterility ; but at other times he will feel himself the magician of thought. Luminous ideas will dart from the intellectual firmament, just as if the stars were falling around him ; sometimes he must think by mental moonlight, but sometimes his ideas reflect the solar splendors.

49. *Casual thoughts are sometimes of great value*.—One of these may prove the key to open for us a yet unknown apartment in the palace of truth, or a yet unexplored tract in the paradise of sentiment that environs it.

50. *Self-complaisant ignorance in judging distinguished characters*.—I heard lately an educated lady say she did not admire Shakspeare at all. *I* admired *her*. It has often struck me as curious to observe the entire, unhesitating self-complacency with which characters assume to admire and detest, in opposition to the concurrent opinions of all the most enlightened and thinking minds. . . . With all this self-satis-

fied feeling, the most ignorant, or the most illiberal, hearers of sermons pronounce on the talents, &c., of the preachers.

51. *Fragment of a letter, never sent, to a friend.*—In a lonely large apartment I write by a glimmering taper, too feeble to dispel the spectres which imagination describes, flitting or hovering in the twilight of the remote corners. The wind howls without, and at intervals I hear a distant bell, tolling amid antiquity and graves. The place and the hour might suit well for an appointed interview with a ghost, coming to reveal, though obscurely, “the secrets of the world unknown.” I almost fancy I perceive his approach; a certain trembling consciousness seems to breathe through the air; an indistinct sullen sound, like the tread of unseen footsteps, passes along the ground, and seems to come toward me; I fearfully look up—and behold!!—Thus abruptly last night I stopped, not without reason surely.

52. *Most interesting idea, that of renovated being.*—I am not the person I was, the past is nothing to me; the past *I* is not the present *I*; I have transited into another person; I am my own phoenix.

53. *Pleasure of recognition.*—The feeling which accompanies the recognition of an object that is not in itself interesting, but where the interest is in the circumstance of recognition. I have a feeling of this kind in seeing what I believe to be the same butterfly again at a considerable distance from where I saw it before.

54. *Misapprehension of friends.*—One limitation to the noble indifference to what people think and say of us. Every generous mind will regret those misapprehensions of its conduct, which occasion mortification to the person who misapprehends—as that a person you respect should, through some mistake, believe that you have ridiculed or injured him.

55. *On the question of the equality of men and*

women.—A lady, in answer to my very serious reasoning to prove that, if naturally equal, nothing can bring the woman to an actual equality, but the same course of vigorous mental exertion which professional men are obliged to go through, said, "Well, we shall be content to occupy a lower ground of intellectual character and attainment." I replied, "You may then be consoled; we from that more elevated region shall sometimes, in the intervals of our grand interests and adventures, look down complacently and converse with you, till the emphasis of some momentous subject return, and call us to transact with our equals. It will be ours to inhabit the paradise on the high summit of that mount which you will never climb; we shall eat habitually the fruit of the trees of knowledge, but we will kindly sometimes throw you a few apples down the declivity."

56. *Amusing idea, of playing a concert of people*, that is, drawing forth the various passions, prejudices, &c., of a small company of persons, and mixing them, soothing them, exciting them, and, in short, entirely playing all their characters at the will, and by the unnoticed influence of the player.

57. *Observation during a walk of a few miles alone*.—This glaring, steady sunshine gives an indistinct sameness to all objects, very like a frequent state of my mind, distended in a fixed, general, vacant stare, incapable of individualizing. Hughes described it very correctly once, after hearing me perform a mental exercise while my mind was in this state: "All luminous, but no light." It is possible to go on in this case, with a train of diction which may sound well enough, and even look fine, while it conveys no definite conceptions.

58. *Revelation explained by science*.—Effect of the application of astronomical science, or rather of the immense ideas derived from astronomy, to modify

theological notions from the state in which divines exhibit them.

59. *An active mind*, like an Æolian harp, arrests even the vagrant winds, and makes them music.

60. *Test of originality*.—Have I so much originality as I suppose myself to have? The question rises from the reflection that very few original plans of action or enterprise ever occurred to my thoughts.

61. *Standard characters*.—A human being like Edwin (the minstrel) would be the proper touchstone to bring into the routine of fashionable life, talk, amusements, &c.: what *his* feeling would nauseate *is* nauseous.

62. *Disparity between means and ends*.—No scheme so mortifying as that which employs large means to accomplish little ends. Let your system be magnitude of end with the utmost economy of means.

63. *To the Deity*.—Give me all that is necessary to make me, in the greatest practicable degree, happy and useful. I feel myself so remote from thee, thou grand centre, and so torpid! It is as if those qualities were extinct in my soul which could make it susceptible of thy divine attraction. But oh! thine energy can reach me even here. Attract me, thou great Being, within the sphere of thy glorious light; attract me within the view of thy throne; attract me into the full emanation of thy mercies; attract me within the sphere of thy sacred Spirit's most potent influences. I thank thee for the promise and the prospect of an endless life; I hope to enjoy it amid the "eternal splendors" of thy presence, O Jehovah! I thank thee for this introductory stage, so remarkably separated by that thick-shaded frontier of death, which I see yonder, from the amplitude of the future world.

64. *Interesting reminiscences*.—It would be interesting to look back on all the past of one's life, to see how many, and count how many, vivid little points

of recollection still twinkle through its shade. My mind just now caught sight of one of these stars of retrospect, at the distance of sixteen or seventeen years. It was my once (in a summer evening, the sun not set) lying on my back on the grass, and holding a small earthen vessel, out of which I had just sipped my evening milk, between my face and the sky, in such a way that a few of the soft rays glanced on my eyes, and seemed to form a little living circle of lustre, round an eyelet-hole, through which I fancied visions of entrancing beauty.

65. *Deterioration of political institutions.*—All political institutions will probably, from whatever cause, tend to become worse by time. If a system were now formed, that should meet all the philosopher's and the philanthropist's wishes, it would still have the same tendency; only I do hope that henceforward to the end of time, men's mind will be intensely awake to the nature and operation of their institutions; so that after a new era shall commence, governments shall not slide into depravity without being keenly watched, nor be watched without the sense and spirit to arrest their deterioration.

66. *Mutual recognition of inferior animals.*—I observe that all animals recognise each other in the face, as instinctively conscious that there the being is peculiarly present. What a mysterious sentiment there is in one's recognition of a conscious being in the eye that looks at one, and emphatically if it have some peculiar significance with respect to one's self. A very striking feeling is caused by the opening on one of the eyes of any considerable animal, if it instantly have the expression of meaning. While the eye is shut the being seems not so completely *with* us, as when it looks through the opened organ. It is like holding in our hand a letter which we believe to contain most interesting meanings, but the seal secludes them from us.

67. *The lost teachings of our Lord.*—It seems a thing to be regretted that so much of our Lord's *conversation*, consisting of momentous and infallible truth, should have been irretrievably lost. How much larger, and, if one may say so, how much more valuable, the New Testament would have been, if all the instructions he uttered had been recorded. By what principle of preference were the conversations which the evangelists record, preserved, rather than the others which are lost? That he did many things that are not recorded is distinctly said by John, last chapter, last verse.

68. *Disagreeable associations.*—A very respectable widow, who lost her husband ten or twelve years since, told me that even now the last image of her husband as she saw him ill, delirious and near death, generally first presents itself when she recollects him. I always think I would not choose to see a dear friend dead, because probably the last image would be the most prompt remembrance, and I should be sorry to have the dead image presented to me rather than the living.

69. *The rational soul of brutes.*—Zealously asserted the rational soul and future existence of brutes. Their souls made of the worse end of the celestial manufacture of mind, which was not quite fine enough to make into men. Various strong facts cited to prove that they, at least some of them, possess what we strictly mean by mind, reason, &c.

70. *Mode of addressing the Deity.*—Struck lately at observing in myself with how little change of feeling I passed from an address to the Deity, to an apostrophe to an absent friend. It was indeed a very dear friend.

71. *Due restraint in company.*—The presence of a third person gives a more balanced feeling with respect to an individual that interests one too much.

72. *Figure of the darkness of reason.*—Polished

steel will not shine in the dark; no more can reason, however refined, shine efficaciously, but as it reflects the light of divine truth—shed from heaven.

73. *Value of observation of trifling events.*—I remember buying some trifle of, I think, a fruit-woman, in Ireland, who held me back the piece of money, and requested me, as it was the first money she had taken that day, to “spit on it for luck.” I here regret having made no memoranda of the vast number of curious anecdotes, incidents, and odd glimpses of human nature, which one has met with in the course of years, and forgotten.

74. *An intrusive companion.*—If a stranger on the road is anxious to have you for a companion, it is commonly a proof that his company is not worth having.

75. *Unperceived origin of images of thought.*—Many images are called up in the mind by moral analogies which were not recognised before, that is, were not noticed with a distinct thought.

76. *Transmission of ignorant habits.*—Conjecture after observing the habits and conversation of some rustics, that, superstition excepted, these are identically the same as the habits, and commonplaces, and diction, of one or two centuries past. One thinks they could not have been at that time more ignorant, rude, and destitute of abstraction, than now, and certainly the same causes that prevent acquisition will likewise prevent alteration. The degree remaining nearly the same, the manner can not become much different.

77. *Deception of the senses.*—What endless deceptions of the senses may happen! This morning I mistook one object for a totally different one, in passing it many times within a few feet, till I happened to examine it, when in a moment the deception was destroyed. What a number of reports and recorded facts may be of this kind!

78. *Excitation of mind.*—I do not long for this powerful excitation as an instrument of vain-glory. It is not a thing which, ambition out of the way, would give me no disturbance. No; it is essential to my enjoyment. It is the native impulse of my soul, and it must be gratified, or I shall be either extremely degraded or extremely unhappy; for I am unhappy in as far as I do not feel myself advancing toward true greatness. I feel myself like a large and powerful engine which has not sufficient water or fire to put it completely in motion.

79. *Thoughtless destruction of life.*—I have seen a man, a religious man, press his foot down repeatedly on a small ant-hill, while a great number of the poor animals have been busy on it. I never did such a thing, never. O Providence! how many poor insects of thine are exposed to be trodden to death in each path: are not *all* beings within thy care?

80. *Little interest of human beings in each other.*—At an association lately, observed how little human beings as individuals interest one another, beyond the very narrow limits of relationship, love, or uncommonly devoted friendship. There were several persons with whom I had been acquainted complacently, but without any particular attachment, several years before, and had not seen them for a considerable interval. We met, shook hands—"How do you do?"—"I am glad to see you"—"What have you been doing all this while?"—with a mutual slight smile of complaisance, or of transient kindness, and then in a minute or two we had passed each other, to perform the same ceremony in some other part of the room, without any further recollection or care respecting each other. And yet these insipid assemblages of people from a hundred miles' distance are said to be, in a great measure, for the sake of affection, friendship, &c.

So in London lately, my acquaintance might hap-

pen, or might not happen, to make a slight inquiry about some subject deeply interesting to myself; and if they had happened, by the time that I had constructed the first sentence of reply, the question was forgotten and something else adverted to. So does oneself in the same case; so every one does; we are interested only about self, or about those who form a part of our self-interest. Beyond all other extravagances of folly is that of expecting or wishing to live in a great number of hearts. How very *reasonably probable* is the prevalence of Godwin's universal philanthropy!

81. *Imperfection of the Jewish dispensation.*—Why was the Jewish dispensation so strange, so exterior, so inadequate? Why? Would that the end of the world were come, to explain the proceedings of Providence during its continuance! But I perceive multitudes around me, who know nothing of these doubts and wonderings.

82. *Self-deception.*—Perhaps you may think that vanity betrays me into a flattering estimate of my capacity; and perhaps it does; but after having speculated on myself so long, I doubt whether speculation will now be able to detect the fallacy. It must be left to experiment.

83. *Uncertainty of the future.*—Here I am now, in health, in a field near C——, musing on plans for futurity. What a question it is, “How—when—where—shall I die?”

84. *Fragment of a letter, never sent.*—My dear sir, I consider each of us as having nearly described a semicircle of life since I saw you last, and it is with great pleasure I anticipate the completing of the circle in meeting you again in little more than a week. It would be amusing for each to exhibit memoirs of the incidents and of the course. I was lately considering what would be the effect of a law obliging each person to present, at appointed periods, a history of

JACK DOWNING'S NEW BOOK!

W A Y D O W N E A S T ;

OR, PORTRAITURES OF YANKEE LIFE.

BY SEBA SMITH, ESQ.

Illustrated, 12mo. Price \$1.

"We greet the Major, after a long interval, with profound pleasure and respect. Well do we remember how, years ago, we used to pore over his lucubrations on the events of the time—how he enlightened us by his home-views of the Legislature's doings, of the General's intentions, and of the plans of ambitious Uncle Joshua. Here was the 'spot of his origin,' and around us were the materials from which he drew his stores of instructive wit. Therefore we, of all the reading public, do the most heartily greet his reappearance. We find him a little more artistic than of old, more advanced in grammar and orthography but withal displaying the same intimate knowledge of Down Eastdom, and retaining the same knack of genuine Yankee humor. In fact, taking all things together, no other writer begins to equal him in the delineation of the live Yankee, in the points where that individual differs from all the 'rest of mankind.' This is his great merit as an author, and one which the progress of manners will still further heighten—for it is only in some portions of our own State that the real Yankee can now be found.

"The present book has sixteen chapters devoted to home-stories. They are racy and humorous to a high degree."—*Portland Daily Advertiser*.

"It is now generally conceded that Seba Smith is the ablest, and at the same time the most amusing delineator of Yankee life who has hitherto attempted that humorous style of writing—not excepting even Judge Haliburton himself. This is no rash expression, for there is not a passage in 'Sam Slick' so graphic, funny and comical, but we find equalled if not surpassed in the sensible and philosophic, although ludicrous epistles, of 'Major Jack Downing'—epistles of which we defy the most stupid to glance at a paragraph without reading the whole."—*Philadelphia News*.

"This is a book of real Yankee life, giving the particulars of character and incidents in New England, from the Pilgrim fathers and their generations, Connecticut Blue Laws, and the civic and religious rules, customs, &c., from the Nutmeg State away down East, as far as Mr. Jones ever thought of going. It is a very laughable affair, and every family in all Yankeedom will enjoy its perusal."—*Hingham (Mass.) Journal*.

"There are few readers who do not desire to keep up an acquaintance with the original Major Jack Downing, whose peculiar humor, while it is irresistible in its effects, is never made subservient to immorality. But these stories are an improvement on those originally given by the author, as they are illustrative of Yankee life and character in the good old times of the Pilgrim Fathers."—*Christian Advocate and Journal*.

"The stories are the most humorous in the whole range of Yankee literature, full of genuine wit, rare appreciation of fun, and giving an insight into human motive which shows the close observation and keen relish of life, of a good-humored philosopher."—*Saturday Evening Mail*.

"A charmingly interesting book, this, for all who hail from Down East, or who like to read good stories of home life among the Yankees."—*Salem Register*

EXTRAORDINARY PUBLICATION!

MY COURTSHIP AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

BY HENRY WIKOFF.

A true account of the Author's Adventures in England, Switzerland, and Italy, with Miss J. C. Gamble, of Portland Place, London. 1 elegant 12mo. Price, in cloth, \$1 25.

The extraordinary sensation produced in literary circles by Mr. Wikoff's charming romance of real life, is exhausting edition after edition of his wonderful book. From lengthy reviews, among several hundred received, we extract the following brief notices of the press:

"We prefer commending the book as beyond question the most amusing of the season, and we commend it without hesitation, because the moral is an excellent one."—*Albion*.

"With unparalleled candor he has here unfolded the particulars of the intrigue, taking the whole world into his confidence—'bearing his heart on his sleeve for daws to peck at'—and, in the dearth of public amusements, presenting a piquant nine days' wonder for the recreation of society."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

"The work is very amusing, and it is written in such a vein that one cannot refrain from frequent bursts of laughter, even when the Chevalier is in positions which might claim one's sympathy."—*Boston Evening Gazette*.

"A positive autobiography, by a man of acknowledged fashion, and an associate of nobles and princes, telling truly how he courted and was coquetted by an heiress in high life, is likely to be as popular a singularity in the way of literature as could well be thought of."—*Home Journal*.

"The ladies are sure to devour it. It is better and more exciting than any modern romance, as it is a detail of facts, and every page proves conclusively that the plain, unvarnished tale of truth is often stranger than fiction."—*Baltimore Dispatch*.

"The book, therefore, has all the attractions of a tilt of knight-errants—with this addition, that one of the combatants is a woman—a species of heart-endowed Amazon."—*Newark Daily Mercury*.

"If you read the first chapter of the volume, you are in for 'finis,' and can no more stop without the consent of your will than the train of cars can stop without the consent of the engine."—*Worcester Palladium*.

"Seriously, there is not so original, piquant and singular a book in American literature. Its author is a sort of cross between Fielding, Chesterfield, and Rochefoucault."—*Boston Chronicle*.

"With the exception of Rousseau's Confessions, we do not remember ever to have heard of any such self-anatomization of love and the lover."—*N. Y. Express*.

"The book has cost us a couple of nights' sleep; and we have no doubt it has cost its author and principal subject a good many more."—*N. Y. Evening Mirror*.

"The work possesses all the charm and fascination of a continuous romance."—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce*.

"IT IS A LOVE TALE OF THE MOST ENTRANCING KIND."

Boston Daily Traveller.

'WHO IS THE AUTHOR? WE GUESS A LADY.'—*N. Y. Life Illustrated.*

ISORA'S CHILD.

1 large 12mo. volume. Price \$1 25.

"It is one of those few books of its class that we have read quite through—for we found it to have the requisites of a good book, namely, the power of entertaining the reader to the end of the volume. The story is not complex, but is naturally told; the characters are drawn with sharp delineation and the dialogue is spirited. It is something to add, in the present deluge of bad books with pleasant names, both the morals and 'the moral' of the work are unexceptionable. It is understood to be the production of a lady whose name is not unknown to the reading public; and we congratulate her on the increase of reputation which 'ISORA'S CHILD' will bring her when her present incognito shall be removed."—*Burlington (Vt.) Sentinel.*

"This book starts off with its chapter first, and introduces the reader at once to the heroes and incidents of the really charming story. He will speedily find himself interested as well by the graceful style and the skill with which the different scenes are arranged, as by the beauty of the two principal characters, and the lessons of loving faith, hope, and patience, which will meet him at the turning of almost every leaf. This is one of the best productions of its kind that has been issued this season, and promises to meet with warm approval and abundant success."—*Detroit Daily Democrat.*

"Another anonymous novel, and a successful one. There is more boldness and originality both in its conception and in its execution than in almost any work of fiction we have lately read. Its characters are few, well delineated, and consistently managed. There is no crowding and consequent confusion among the *dramatis personæ*. There are two heroines, however, Flora and Cora, both bewitching creatures, and, what is better, noble, true-hearted women, especially the former, Isora's child—the dark-eyed and passionate, but sensitive, tender, and loving daughter of Italy. The work will make its mark. Who is the author? We guess a lady, and that this is her first book."—*Weekly Life Illustrated.*

"Its incidents are novel and effectively managed; and its style possesses both earnest vigor and depth of pathos, relieved by occasional flashes of a pleasing and genial humor. Among the crowd of trashy publications now issued from the press, a work as true to nature, and as elevated and just in its conceptions of the purposes of life, as this is, is all the more welcome because it is so rare. We have no doubt it will be as popular as it is interesting."—*Albany Evening Journal.*

"We have seldom perused a work of fiction that gave us more real pleasure than this. From first to last page, it enchains the attention, and carries your sympathies along with the fortunes of the heroine. The descriptive powers of the unknown authoress are of the loftiest order, and cannot fail of placing her in the first ranks of authorship."—*Cincinnati Daily Sun.*

"A story which perpetually keeps curiosity on the alert, and as perpetually baffles it till it reaches its dénouement, is certainly a good one."—*Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.*

"Bell's sketches are instinct with life, they sparkle with brilliants, are gemed with wit, and address themselves to almost every chord of the human heart."—*Louisville (Ky.) Bulletin*.

BELL SMITH ABROAD.

A Handsome 12mo. volume. Price \$1 00. With Illustrations by May, Walcutt, and Overarche.

"The readers of the *Louisville Journal* need no introduction from us to Bell Smith. Her own brilliant pen, and her own sparkling, witching and delightful style have so often graced the columns of this paper, and have made so many friends and admirers for her, that we need say but little toward creating a demand for this charming volume. But some tribute is nevertheless due to Bell Smith for the real pleasure she has imparted in every chapter of her book, and that tribute we cheerfully pay. Her admirable powers seem so much at home in every variety and phase of life, that she touches no subject without making it sparkle with the lights of her genius."—*Louisville Journal*.

She is ever piquant in her remarks, and keen from observation; and the result is that her 'Abroad' is one of the most interesting collections of incident and comment, fun and pathos, seriousness and gossip, which has ever fallen under our notice."—*Boston Evening Traveller*.

"It is dashing and vigorous without coarseness—animated with a genial humor—showing acute and delicate perceptions—and sustained by a bracing infusion of common sense."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

"There are many delicate strokes, and not a little of that vivacity of description which entertains. The author shows her best side when matters of home-feeling and affection engage her pen."—*N. Y. Evangelist*.

"History, art and personal narrative are alike imprinted in your memory by the associations of anecdote, merry and grave, and you feel that you are listening to the magical voice of 'Bell Smith' at home. Such volumes enrich and honor American literature."—*Philadelphia Merchant*.

"This is a capital book; full of life, spirit, vivacity and information—thoroughly lady-like, and telling precisely what everybody wants to hear, so far as the author knows."—*Salem Gazette*.

"Spirited and artistic! Bell Smith sparkles, and dashes on, amusing and interesting. A capital book for a leisure hour or railroad travel, or for those seasons when you want to be pleased without effort."—*Cleveland Leader*.

"We like Bell Smith and Bell Smith's book. A lively, free, dashing style, she talks on, and nothing is wanting but the merry laugh we know she is owner of to make us think we are listening to a very interesting woman."—*Chicago Journal*.

"Lively, gossiping, chatting, witty, sparkling Bell Smith, we must confess your book has quite enchanted us."—*N. Y. Day Book*.

"In freshness, piquancy, and delightful episodes, illustrative of foreign life and manners, they have rarely been equalled."—*National Era*.

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN TRAVELLERS' ENTERTAINMENT.

BY JOSIAH BARNES, SEN.

12mo. \$1.

"They will be read with earnest sympathy and heartfelt approval by all who enjoy quiet pictures of the homely, yet often charming scenes of daily life. The style well befits the thoughts expressed, and is equally simple and impressive. We have found in these pages better than a 'traveller's entertainment'—one which will mingle with the pleasant recollections of a home fireside."—*Providence Daily Post*.

"If any of our friends wish to get hold of a book written in a style of pure and beautiful English, that reminds one of Irving continually; a book rich with inventions of the marvellous, and yet abounding in sweet humanities and delicate philosophies—a book that will not tire and cannot offend, let them go to a bookstore and buy 'The Old Inn; or, the Travellers' Entertainment,' by Josiah Barnes, Sen. It will pay the reader well."—*Springfield (Mass.) Republican*.

"It should be praise enough to say that the author reminds one occasionally of Irving."—*Philadelphia Bulletin*.

"Unless we err greatly, a volume so markedly original in its outline and features will attract a large share of attention."—*Boston Evening Gazette*.

"This is a very pleasant book. The plan of it, if not new, is just as well carried out. Five or six or half-a-dozen 'travellers' meet at an indifferent tavern in an indifferent part of Vermont, upon a seriously unpleasant day, and to pass away the dull hours, they fall to story-telling. The record of their performances in that behalf is made up into the volume 'above entitled.' So agreeable became the diversion that not only the evening of the first day, but as the following morning was conveniently stormy, the second day is consumed in similar diversions. Those who read the book will agree with us, that a stormy day and a country inn, with such alleviation, presents no very great hardship to the traveller, unless his business is particularly urgent. We commend the book to those who like a pleasant story, pleasantly told."—*Budget, Troy, N. Y.*

"Under the above title we have several interesting stories as told by the various characters at the fireside of a comfortable, old fashioned inn, to while away the long hours of storm, by which they were detained. The Little Dry Man's, the supposed Lawyer's, and the Quaker's stories are all worth listening to. They are well told and entertain the reader."—*Bangor Journal*.

"This is a series of stories, supposed to be related to while away the time, in an old inn, where a party of travellers are storm-stayed, consisting of the 'Little Dry Man's Story,' the 'Supposed Lawyer's Story,' 'Incidents of a Day at the Inn,' the 'Quaker's Story,' and 'Ellen's Grave.' The stories are well told. There is a charming simplicity in the author's style—all the more delightful, because, now-a-days, simplicity of language is a rarity with authors. It is a book to take up at any moment, and occupy a leisure hour—to lay aside, and take up again and again. We commend its tone, and the object of the author. It is a pleasant companion on a country journey."—*N. Y. Dispatch*.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2009

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 492 497 6

